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Robe Specified for Omnia Superclub

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Omnia in Las Vegas is the latest superclub phenomenon launched by Hakkasan Worldwide, a brand with a profile and reputation that is constantly raising expectations of international clubbing adventure worldwide.

Over 100 Robe moving lights were specified for a truly innovative and epic entertainment lighting design that graces the main room of the new club at Ceasar's Palace – a name itself synonymous with the legend of this crazy city with its insatiable fast pace and ever transient landscape!

The brief from Hakkasan CEO Neil Moffit to the technical and creative teams involved in Omnia encompassed superlatives like 'awesome' 'breath-taking' and 'mind-blowing', so architectural / interior designers The Rockwell Group and entertainment technology integration specialist Audiotek worked to ensure that his ambitions to create the most outrageously immersive, opulent and simply amazing premium clubbing experience in Las Vegas ... were met to the max.

The Robe fixtures are part of a spectacular lighting scheme delivered by Willie Williams –Show Designer for some of the most savvy and intelligently visual live artists on the planet - like U2, Robbie Williams, REM, etc. Invited to bring his magic touch and help coordinate the entertainment lighting package to the party by Audiotek's Frank Murray, Omnia is his first venture into club lighting design, a challenge he accepted with some trepidation.

The main room features a massive, jaw-dropping chandelier centerpiece, with 8 moving rings, complete with an internally LED-lit crystal sub-chandelier within ... which has even been the subject of Twitter trending!

Audiotek, led by Frank, was at the heart of all Omnia's entertainment technology aspects including design, specification, assessment and realization, together with the procurement and commissioning of all equipment.

Having worked with the principals of Hakkasan Worldwide for over 20 years across three continents, Frank and Audiotek had also delivered the show-stopping technical elements that have helped make Hakkasan at the MGM Grand - also in Las Vegas - a leading destination for international clubbers.

Once Willie was committed to the project, he worked closely on imagineering the lighting details with Audiotek's Head of Lighting Andy Taylor and their Engineering Director Chris Kmeic. All collaborated and communicated closely and constantly with The Rockwell Group based in New York.

"Bringing someone of Willie's caliber and imagination on the team was an absolute coup," explained Frank excitedly. "The space needed to be totally unique from anything else seen before, so Willie brought a completely different perspective and approach along with his characteristic daring and insouciance!"

Frank has known Willie for over 25 years, while he was a budding young designer working with incendiary Belfast punk band Stiff Little Fingers.

"Willie brought his enormous experience and fantastic imagination to the table," enthused Frank.

"While a club was a completely new environment for him ... we wanted to bring his complete understanding of 'show spectacle' to our picture."

David Chesal from Robe Lighting Inc. was also an integral part of the team, bringing his vast experience of club lighting - which also includes Hakkasan Las Vegas - to the table, and as the chandelier - which blends elements of Art Deco and Futurism and can seamlessly morph between the two art-forms presenting them in a completely new context - and the supporting lighting evolved, the specification took shape. From the beginning it was essential to have the most reliable technology in a tough and exacting environment, and they also needed moving lights that were punchy and versatile. Robe ticked all the boxes, and they chose Pointes, MMX Spots and ROBIN 300E Spots.

The chandelier fills the main club's 20 metre (65 ft) domed ceiling and is made up of the eight concentric rings, all rigged with lighting fixtures - including some of the Robes - and projection elements.

Engineered by TAIT, it's total weight is nearly 6 tonnes (13,000 lbs), the largest ring is nearly 10 metres (32ft) in diameter and the smallest one is 4 metres (13ft) and all of them are fabricated from frosted plastic with a grey interior finish.

The beautifully fluid movement is controlled via 21 winches in the grid which run at 1 metre a second. A total of 33 x Robe Pointes and 18 x MMX Spots are split between rings 4 and 8 of the chandelier, and they are used to produce all the WOW factors that you would expect from these incredibly dynamic fixtures.

Another 12 x MMX Spots are rigged in the tiered seating above the main room bar, with another four on a truss above the DJ booth.

Twenty four of the ROBIN 300E Spots are positioned on the underside of the mezzanine level around the room, and 16 x ROBIN 300E Spots and eight Pointes are used to provide lighting in the 'Heart of Omnia' second room.

Some of the lighting programming includes a continuity of looks and effects flowing through the two spaces.

In many ways Pointes were an obvious choice for the application explained Andy Taylor. Their collective past experiences had all seen the impact of large arrays of beam lights and having a variable beam angle was important in this club environment, both as a backbone fixture and as a main workhorse required to produce as many varied looks and effects as possible.

Having Pointes at 1 metre (3ft) centres on circular trusses is "Fantastic for creating interlacing beam patterns" declared Andy, and this adds a whole new layer of movement to the chandelier,

simultaneously heightening its 'spaceship' qualities.

At times it looks like the whole structure is descending on the razor sharp beams of lighting emanating from the Pointes.

"The MMX Spots were chosen primarily for their dual graphics wheels and the fantastic range of aerial and projected effects," revealed Andy.

They fill the gaps with wider and different in-air effects and can also be irised right down to create additional beams when needed as well as being perfect for texturing and projected effects.

While Omnia's main function is as a club, it can also be utilized as an event space where a greater variety and different styles of lighting are required, so all this was built into the design at the outset.

"The MMX's give great scope for the creation of numerous moods and ambiances as well as texturing the space at the start and finish of the evening," said Andy. They can also be used in the more traditional role of specials or keys to highlight performers.

The MMX Spots on the cascading ceiling above the bar introduce lighting and texturing to that area and can also be utilized to backlight the DJ.

The compact ROBIN 300E Spot was selected because they needed a fixture to complement the colours and gobos of the MMX Spot and it needed to be small enough to blend in to the background across these lower ceilinged areas.

The output of the 300E Spot is "Fantastic" compared to most of the other smaller moving spot units, maintains Andy, adding that a unit powerful enough to compete with the considerable amount of ambient lighting being thrown off the video surfaces ... was vital to the design.

These handy little lights play a dual role in the large and complex overall picture mastered to bring THE ultimate clubbing visual experience to Omnia's international audiences.

Firstly, they provide a lower level layer of lighting shooting onto the dancefloor. Flipping between these and the higher level / overhead fixtures can unite the room and create a real energy with the contrasting angles and pockets of light.

Secondly, they are also used to draw the lower levels of the space into the action. The mezzanine is quite deep and the area beneath it can become black and isolated, but with the 300E Spots working their magic down there, these areas become instantly involved in the main buzz.

The Omnia project has been intense but exceptionally rewarding for Frank Murray and his team and has consumed them for around 18 months, including eight on site!

From the outset, Frank explained, the client brief was clear and precise. The goal was to create something "Better than anything on the Las Vegas scene to date".

Using the height and scale of the room and the right lighting has enabled them to come up with a legacy that is "Truly awesome to give the venue a distinct personality and make it the most luxurious, outlandish, inventive and visually impressive".

It's something that sets new standards of global nightclub 'showmanship' and the investment in time and budgets has all been worth it as Omnia has already become a flagship venue and an aspiration for others to follow.

"An amazing team came together to produce a result we are all completely proud of," Frank concluded with one of this charismatic Irish grins!

Omnia opened in a blaze of glory headlined by Calvin Harris, with an upcoming line-up including the hottest dance music and vibes from Armin van Buuren, Afrojack, Chuckie, Martin Garrix, Oliver Heidens, Krewella, Nicky Romero and many more.

Shortly after the grand opening it also hosted a high profile 21st birthday celebration for Justin Bieber.

Photo Credit: Drew Ressler



