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Robe Hits the High Notes for Soprano Stadium Show

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French rapper Soprano packed the Stade Velodrome in Marseilles with 55,000 fans for a hugely exciting, much anticipated and totally unique homecoming performance!

Ensuring that it was a memorable night for everyone, the lighting design was by created by Victorien Cayzele from All Access Design (AAD),- the well-known Parisian multimedia studio recently acquired by entertainment industry leader Moment Factory - utilizing over 150 Robe BMFL and Spikie moving lights.

The show followed on from a hugely successful arena tour which played to round 700,000 people from all over France, which had also featured Victorien's fresh and innovative lighting concept.

Victorien's starting point for the stadium show was a larger version of the set designed by Julien Mairesse that had been on tour. The video content was also part of the AAD visual package, with playback content created under the direction of AAD's Jordan Magnee.

The striking set was shaped like a mountain - representing the album "L'Everest" - and made from aluminium tiles, measuring approximately 7 metres high and 20 metres wide. All video content was mapped to fit this structure allowing song narratives to be supported and more abstract imagery to be projected and reinforce different numbers in a constantly flowing dynamic.

In addition to these parameters, Victorien's perception of the songs, the lyrics and the rhythm all played a part in how he interpreted the lighting, together with some solid practical production logistics related to get in and load out times, truck space and how many were on the lighting and video crews.

All the trussing and lighting positions referred to the set which was right at the centre of the action. Victorien specified 14 x BMFL Blades. Twelve were positioned on one of the longer over-stage trusses, each mounted on a drop-pipe to follow the contour of the mountain, with two on a side ladder.

As with the tour, the BMFL Blades were really the backbone of the lighting design and they were used for all the standard effects, for general ambient lighting and for precise point and key lights. "The BMFL Blade is a beautiful and elegant fixture," commented Victorien.

The 44 x BMFL Spots were placed on the roof encircling the stadium, so there was a group of high powered fixtures that could sweep in and skim across the audience, mimicking the same effects and colours as the stage lighting.

Zoomed in or out, these produced a series of spectacular effects in the stadium, as well as drawing the fans into the action onstage.

He also utilized 32 x BMFL WashBeams. Twelve were deployed behind the stage, used to create long perspective effects from the back, while the other 20 were on four large ladders close to the upstage LED screen which was behind the scenic mountain.

These BMFL WashBeams were used for specials ... with their long throw and high intensity and they were also beamed around into the audience for bold, full-on effects for the cameras.

The WashBeams were chosen to work in unison with the BMFL Spots but with contrasting effects, and they were really helpful for the large eye-candy looks that were outstanding on camera and really accentuated the size and depth of the Stade Velodrome.

Generally on BMFLs, Victorien likes the rapid CMY mixing and the fast zoom and iris. "You can create some really amazing effects just using the speed variables of these parameters".

Sixty-six Spikies made up a centre-stage V-shape ... effectively a larger version of the effect used on the tour with 12 Spikies flown in a triangular shape on vari-speed hoists. Everyone was keen to retain this effect but on a grander scale for the stadium show.

Victorien loves Spikies for their small size and versatility and also they can be used as a pixel-mapped effect. "I used the special characteristics of this little lightsource to create a sense of proportion which could be tweaked with the dynamics of the flower effect combined with different colours, beams and washes, etc."

He uses a lot of Robe products generally in his design projects, however it's the BMFL that is currently a 'must-have', "It has absolutely everything you would want and is powerful and versatile, and that's exactly what you need on the road - fewer fixtures that go a lot further is a great advantage!"

The most challenging aspects of the Marseilles show were migrating an arena design into a stadium and keeping all the essentials that had worked so successfully on the tour, whilst adding a proportionate amount of new kit to make it larger.

To maintain the lighting in similar positions to the tour entailed a few different and creative rigging solutions.

"I wanted to get the same levels of engagement and enthusiasm from the audiences as we had on the tour and maintain that connection ... on a massively bigger scale and in a totally different environment".

He adds that he was really pleased that the extreme brightness of the BMFL was easily powerful enough for the job so he could have continuity on the fixtures to big up the rig.

Four grandMA2 lights were used to run lighting and video. Victorien programmed and operated the lighting himself working at FOH with Victor Lagiewski who also called follow spots during the show and Etienne Genatas who directed the lighting levels for the TV camera mix which was directed by Tristan Carné, with Emilien Grezes in charge of 'global' creative co-ordination.

Lighting equipment was supplied by Dushow, project managed for them by Didier Dast and Alex Capponi. "The team was brilliant - exemplary professionals throughout the process," praised Victorien, wrapping up our interview.

Others vital to making the show rock included chief electrician Casaban Sebastien, moving light technician Pierric Leblanc, lighting tech / follow spot operators Nicolas Koscianski and Sylvain Rausa. IMAG video for the side stage LED screens was directed by Julien Faustino. The video chief and media server management was looked after by Lionnel Mulet and the video assistant and projection operator was Johanne Chauland. WYSIWYG and technical support came from Gael Szpak and last but by no means least ... technical director and production manager, Pascal Meley - assisted by Aymeric Sorriaux - made sure everything ran smoothly and efficiently on site.





