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Robe for House of Dancing Water Show Spectacular

Products Involved

BMFL™ Wash / Wash XF Tarrantula™

The world's largest and most spectacular water-based show – The House of Dancing Water directed by the legendary Franco Dragone and staged in the purpose-built House of Dancing Water Theatre in Macau – has just added 63 new Robe moving lights to the theatre's rig.

The 41 x BMFL Wash XFs and 21 x Tarrantula LED wash beam lighting fixtures have now been installed in the theatre as part of a drive to upgrade the technical equipment to include more sustainable and advanced options than were available when the show launched in 2010.

The integrity, drama and dynamics of Luc Lafortune's original lighting design are all preserved as the concept works beautifully and timelessly to support the show narrative. The House of Dancing Water (THODW) show is one of the most successful entertainment phenomena in the world – having clocked up over 3,500 performances, it has been enjoyed by over 3 million spectators who have been enthralled by this incredible work of aquatic art - the first original water-based theatre show ever launched in Asia.

Head of lighting, projections and special effects for the theatre and show is Karl Jenkins. He's been in the post for two and a half years where he runs a team of 26 technicians and has previously worked on several ambitious Cirque du Soleil projects. Karl was instrumental in the Robe fixtures being added to the show.

They needed a strong and robust wash moving light to replace the previous ones, and the BMFL Wash XF was selected after Karl and his team spent considerable time looking at all the currently available possibilities.

“Ultimately it was the output, the colour mixing and the beautiful fresnel lens that put the BMFL on top” he confirms.

They didn't need a multi-purpose unit, but they wanted that rich and deep fresnel look coupled with a high output to deal with the long throw distance, with refined and elegant colour mixing.

The final decision was taken by Karl and his head console operator/programmer Justin F Sinclair, who has been with the show since the beginning. The lights were delivered by Robe's Hong Kong distributor, ArcSource Ltd.

The BMFLs are all positioned in the overhead grid on levels 5 and 6, at between 18 and 25 metres above the stage.

The Tarrantulas are enclosed in a series of Plexiglas 'lighting bubbles' below the water's surface, and are used to highlight the underwater environment, working in unison with the special FX including 'boiling' and other effects created by microbubbles in the water.

Karl and the team specifically wanted an LED wash luminaire for this task.

They conducted a shootout with other products, and "the Tarrantula blew us away with its power and versatility".

While LED was a major consideration for Karl in deciding on these fixtures for its reduced environmental impact, low heat emission was also a practical factor due to their location in the very confined 'bubble' enclosures.

With over 1000 fixtures in total in the show - including several submersible IP 67 and 68 ones, Robe is now also an integral and important part of this landmark production.

The whole lighting system is run via a grandMA2 network with a Luminex backbone which is another recent upgrade.

In addition to choosing the right fixtures for the job, Karl states that the after-sales service and support from a manufacturer is paramount in the equation for a long running and high-profile show like this. "Robe has brought an impressive amount of dedication to the table before, during and after the purchase. The training and follow-up from both Robe directly and their local distributor, ArcSource Ltd has been fantastic!"

He thinks Robe has made some "huge statements" and moved forward rapidly as a technology brand in recent years. "The staff, products and service have taken leaps and bounds, and they are now competing at the very top of the market. I am incredibly happy with the Robe 'Family' and, now very definitely feeling a part of it".

About House of Dancing Water Show

The production is a \$250 million (USD) world-class production exclusive to Macau, originated by Belgian theatre director Franco Dragone, founder and artistic director of Dragone and also renowned for his work with Cirque du Soleil and superstar singer Celine Dion.

The House of Dancing Water Theatre is a 270-degrees in the round venue with around 2000 seats. Eight stage lifts on the centre stage make it possible to convert a 7-metre-deep aquatic environment into a solid stage floor in just 75 seconds!

The pool holds approximately 12 million litres of water (enough to fill 5 Olympic sized swimming pools), and over 300 talented artists and technicians - representing over 30 nationalities - are working hard day-in-day-out to make this breathtakingly visual and all-encompassing performance so special and memorable.

Photo Credit: DickWai Lai







