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Monumental Live Event Launch for Robe iBOLTS in France

Products Involved

iBOLT™

Robe's new iBOLT made its French debut in grand style at a recent 'Monumental' event at the Notre-Dame Cathedral in Laon Aisne in the Hauts-de-France.

Monumental is an interactive music and visual live experience concept imagined and presented by DJ, music producer and live experience innovator Michael Canitrot.

He has styled a series of these bespoke performances which are staged in and around some of France's most striking landmarks. Built in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Laon Cathedral heritage site is one of the most important and stylistically unified examples of early French Gothic architecture.

The event's lighting was designed by Mikael (Mika) Trochu who specified the six iBOLTS, rented from Dushow, which were positioned in an arc around the DJ booth, so they were right at the epicentre of this special musical event.

Mikael worked alongside video mapping designer Jérémie Bellot from AV Extended and lighting and sound supplier Bendelight plus the Monumental event technical directors, Martin Javouret and Enguerran de la Chevasnerie. They started with site surveys to establish what was possible, practical, and safe to install in terms of production.

Having previously used Robe fixtures - particularly MegaPointes - on other Monumental events, including another show here at this same venue in 2022, Mikael thought it was a perfect opportunity to experiment with the new iBOLT which was launched at Prolight+Sound in March this year.

Challenges included making a BIG impact with the event's lighting but also complementing the complex video being projected onto the 56-metre-high façade of the building. Tight, powerful beams were ideal to support for this clearly defined graphical signature and Mika thought iBOLT would be a

perfect solution. Apart from that ... he jumped at the chance to get his hands on them and integrate them into one of his designs.

"Working with new technology is always exciting," he commented, "and the iBOLTS didn't disappoint!"

He thought the fully focused beams would punch out into the night sky remaining tight and intact with no diffraction, projecting far away with its laser source, and sure enough, the definition and sharpness of the beam was maintained even at a 200-metre distance, which he found impressive.

"This linear consistency is critical when lighting long or tall buildings and for wide-angle photos and video shoots where I can maintain a straight pencil-like effect combined with the video mapping which looks very cool, and it worked like a dream," he enthused.

He added that the iBOLT's 300mm fat lens size allows larger spaces to be filled with fewer fixtures which is handy for many scenarios. "It's a next-generation tracer light, free from the drawbacks of blurry beams, and I love it!" he declared.

While he would have liked more iBOLTS for this event to create more of a cage-like effect in front of the artist, the six fixtures achieved the effect "brilliantly - and exactly as I envisioned." He used them in conjunction with 14 x MegaPointes, which were positioned on the ground and on a balcony approximately halfway up the Cathedral's façade.

During programming, he discovered a quirk that is also a positive feature which occurs when the beam is fully defocused and opened - it spills around the internal optics creating a hot spot cone at the centre of the open beam, something that Mika found "remarkably appealing!" and incorporated into the show. "It's an effect I will definitely be using again," he stated. When discussing it with the Robe team, they acknowledged the idiosyncrasy and are equally intrigued, so it will be staying in the fixture for everyone's creative benefit!

Mika also used the iBOLTS to create splintering beams shooting off in multiple directions as they interacted with concealed mirror balls, an effect that filled the lower parvis of the Cathedral façade with eye-popping shards of light radiating in every direction to ramp up the drama and energy.

He thinks that the movement is quick, responsive, and remarkably quiet for a fixture of its scale and power.

The show was run partly from timecode and partly cued manually. Projectors were supplied by Leni (Leader des technologies de l'événementiel).

Mika also took time to ensure that the iBOLT's 500W laser light source would not be dipping below 45 degrees, scanning the audience, or getting in anyone's eyes, especially those sitting on people's shoulders.

With safety to the fore, Robe's patented, constantly scanning ScanGuard™ system instantly reduces the fixture's output if someone gets within an unsafe viewing distance.

The Monumental show was hugely successful and yet a unique musical and visual moment for Laon Cathedral, experienced live by over 3,000 spectators gathered on the square in front.

Photo Credit: Geoffrey Hubbel





