

22.9.2023

Robe Colours It Up in Ostrava

Products Involved

FORTE® ESPRITE® LEDBeam 350™ LEDBeam 150™ iPointe65® Tetra2™ Spiider®
MegaPointe® BMFL™ WashBeam RoboSpot™

Colours of Ostrava is the Czech Republic's largest and most eclectic music festival, currently staged against the imposing backdrop of old blast furnaces, cooling towers, ore cauldrons, casting shops and other enormous industrial relics from the amazing Dolní Oblast Vitkovice (DOV) steelworks in Ostrava, the country's third biggest city.

The 2023 edition was another big success, with over 250 artists appearing across 20 stages over 4 days. Robe moving lights had a big presence, including on the two largest performance areas - the Ceska Sportelna / Main Stage, and the adjacent Liberty Stage.

Colours' technical director Josef "Pepa" Ženíšek led a core production team of 35 from his Prague based company, SMART Production, who co-ordinated all aspects of the technical production - staging, rigging, lighting, sound, video, audio, stage management and all associated infrastructure. At times, over 550 technical crew were working on assorted aspects of the project from building the site to ensuring that the 50,000 audience enjoyed the best possible guest experiences.

SMART Production dealt with 9 main rental companies for technical production, mostly from the Czech Republic, some from Slovakia.

Pepa is also instrumental in the production lighting designs for the six main music stages, and comments, "There's always a lot of Robe products on site because there are such a wide range of fixtures to choose from and they are very reliable. Exactly what you need for a festival situation."

Finding Liberty

This year, leading Czech rental company T-Servis led by Jana Heřmánková supplied lighting and sound to the Liberty Stage for the first time, although they have serviced other smaller Colours performance areas around the site for several years.

Jana was “delighted” with winning the contract for this important stage together with her team including crew chief Ivo Cernohorsky.

The company has invested steadily in Robe over the years and the brand is a “firm festival favourite,” commented Ivo, who designed and specified the lighting kit for the stage. They didn’t receive any input from artists or their riders, so the rig was based on Ivo’s vast experience of festivals and providing good, solid, dynamic and all all-round practical lighting options for everyone appearing on the stage.

He operated lights for any artists not bringing their own LDs or lighting directors.

Thirty-eight Robe ESPRITES were the backbone of the system, with eight fixtures each distributed across the three over stage trusses, plus another 14 on the front truss where they were “a great choice” for keys and specials, confirmed Ivo.

They were joined by 31 x Spiiders, distributed between the front truss and drop-down ladders that were filling in the upstage corners, which greatly enhanced the perception of depth onstage, in turn making a big difference to how artists looked both live and on camera.

Twenty Robe Tetra2 moving LED battens were rigged on the three over stage trusses and used very effectively for pixel effects and other eye candy, and 12 x Robe MegaPointes – which no self-respecting festival rig would be without – were available as part of the floor package on the deck.

Six BMFL WashBeams on the front truss provided further front lighting, and this year these and the Spiiders were critical in this position as there was no additional front lighting on the FOH tower. This kept all the lighting neat and concentrated onstage.

Other lights on the Liberty Stage included some beam moving lights at the back on drop ladders, with strobes and 4-lite blinders scattered around for stage and audience illumination.

Two consoles resided at FOH, a Hog 4 which is Ivo’s console of choice with a grandMA2 as the second desk. Some LDs also brought in their own console, while others had their own complete floor packages.

Ivo thinks Robe is an ideal choice for festival production designs. “The fixtures are robust and just keep working whatever the weather, providing plenty of functionality and visiting LDs and operators are always happy to work with them.”

In the Main

For the second year running, Pepa and SMART Productions specified a RoboSpot system for the main stage, which this year comprised four of Robe's new high powered FORTE LED profile fixtures running on four RoboSpot BaseStations located under the stage. They had originally used RoboSpots in 2022 where this very flexible system was specified for Twenty One Pilots' set.

Also on the main stage in 2023 were 20 x Robe MegaPointes and 18 x iPointes, the latter were positioned along the front edges of the stage and the left and right wings in some of the most exposed positions.

Lighting, audio, and LED screens for this stage were supplied by HighLite Touring.

New for the Main Stage this year were striking 30-metre-wide deco walls flanking the main stage, complete with their own lighting, which helped define the space and kept fans focussed on the onstage action.

The sound system designs and positioning were also tweaked slightly to improve the audio containment across the site, the VIP areas were repurposed and boosted from last year, and improvement in the site-wide architectural lighting helped bring the environment to life after dark, highlighting the heavy metal monuments towering in the background.

"We like to keep things evolving and developing each year," commented Pepa, who has mindfully steered the production forward since the event moved to the DOV site in 2012.

Around the Site

Other Robe products in action around the site included 22 x Tetra2s on the Drive Stage, also supplied by HighLite Touring, while T-Servis and AV Media supplied the Glo Stage with 10 x Tetras and 20 x LEDBeam 350s among other lights. Cross Audio delivered lighting including 16 x LEDBeam 150s to the Cacao Stage.

For all these smaller stages, the production lighting designs were created and specified by SMART Productions.

Eight Robe CityScape Xtreme LED floods were part of the architectural lighting scheme illuminating the vast industrial structures dating to when DOV thrived as a black coal and raw steel manufacturing plant between 1928 and 1998 when it closed and the decommissioning process started.

Apart from hosting Colours of Ostrava, the site now offers funky office, warehouse, and commercial space for a variety of creative and tech companies, is a buzzing educational, cultural, and social hub

as well as a popular visitor attraction detailing the region's rich industrial heritage.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland







