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# Robe Embraces Armin

## Products Involved

**LEDBeam 100™**   **LEDWash 600™**   **Pointe®**

DJ, music producer and international superstar Armin van Buuren launched his new 'Armin Only' spectacular at Amsterdam Ziggo Dome – Armin Only Embrace – once again uniting the hugely talented technical and creative team that delivered the 'Armin Only - Intense' world tour in 2014.

Central to the energy, excitement and emotion of the 4 hour trance extravaganza in Amsterdam were 162 Robe moving lights – a megamix of Pointes, LEDWash 600s and LEDBeam 100s – among other fixtures crafted into the visual landscape.

Embrace is another truly unique and imaginative immersive musical, visual and sonic experience from the "State of Trance" originator. Based on the new album and its multiplicity of sounds, he and special guests - including impresario jazz trumpeter Eric Vloeimans, rock band Kensington, singers from other musical genres and eight dancers - will stun and amaze fans worldwide. The world class production values demanded by the show ... will be supplied locally.

This was one of the practical starting points for the lighting department, comprising LDs Marc Heinz and André Beekmans (The Art of Light) who created the design, and Armin's long term lighting director on-the-road, Michael Seeverens also from The Art of Light. Marc, well known for his work in the arts and theatre world - was again asked on-board by the show concept / creative director Jos Thie and AO producers ALDA to bring a theatrical vibe to the lighting. The impressive LED video screen upstage of Armin's DJ booth was based on the new Armin logo - a 'closed' version of the famous A.

Marc worked closely with André, who is founder and lead designer of Eindhoven based creative lighting & programming practice, The Art of Light, and as a design tour-de-force, they collaborated with video director Carlo Ruijgers, ambient / playback video content producers Eyesupply and stage / set designer Sander Reneman from 250K.

It's clear to see how the synergies of Marc's theatrical and Andre's EDM lighting experiences combine, compliment and play out during the show.

The 74 x Pointes were dotted around on the overhead trusses and on the stage floor. Twenty-four were dedicated to highlighting scenic elements around the performance space, while the

other 50 were in the grid above the stage and on the stage deck - utilized for all the super-bright, funky effects at which they excel. There was also a run of Pointes above the catwalk encasing it in an A-shaped cage at certain moments.

Taking advantage of the Pointes' hybrid features the lights was used as a beam and a spot fixture, opening up another whole round of variety.

The 60 x LEDBeam 100s were rigged on six slanted vertical trusses that extended the A-shape widthways across the stage and wings.

Masking the corners of the screen in keeping with the A-shape involved a perceived reduction in space, so these trusses were partly architectural in function and also allowed the fixtures to sweep out across the arena, scanning the audience and opening out the space. The LEDWash 600s lit the dancers, with eight on the trusses above the thrust / B-stage and the rest along the edges of the runway below.

The breath-taking results of all these collective imaginations and the innovative mixed-media approach enthralled 34,000 fans at the Ziggo Dome over two nights, and will go on to do the same internationally as Armin and AO Embrace/s the world!

Crafting the lighting design started in August 2015. As always, in addition to the creative demands, Marc and Andre considered how the show is being toured, what equipment is likely to be the most available in different territories, etc. ... and naturally, the budget! It had to be big, bold and jaw-dropping, make huge statements, be able to support four hours of full-on banging trance performance without looking repetitive and also have the finesse to support and accentuate the different guest sections ... and ultimately still not be too complicated or over-fussy so it can work everywhere!

This is a big 'ask'.

Embrace is also about Armin being close-up and intimate with his audience, with a runway / B-stage thrusting into the arena and much of the performance action, dancing, etc. taking place on here, right in the heart of the fans.

So, with all that in mind fixture choices were influenced by what was likely to be the most available on different continents and what first or second substitutes were likely to be. This decision alone can be the difference between spending 35 minutes or 8 hours of cloning / fixture swapping and updating the console ... before any show programming and tweaking can even start!

Unlike Intense that was 95% indoors, around 50% of the Embrace shows will be staged outside, so the lighting design and specification needed to address this too. "We chose only the most reliable fixtures in our experience" stated Andre, "and this included the Robes". Just as the show reveals multiple layers and depths as it unfolds, with the dancers, singers and musicians each adding new dynamic twists to the action, it was important that different areas of the stage were lit as individual spaces with their own definition. The audience is connected further by being lit and drawn into the action.

Lighting equipment for the two Ziggo Dome launch gigs and two 'sneak previews' at Brabanthallen in Den Bosch – following an intense three week production rehearsal period – was supplied by leading Dutch rental company, The Purple Group.

arminonly.com, "As a DJ/producer I want to connect people to this world full of inspiring combinations. An endless universe of possibilities is waiting to be embraced. Everything is possible" says Armin ... and it seems all the ingredients are in place for another crazy year of AO touring!

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland















