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Robe ESPRITES Help create a Big Picture for 2022 Halberg Awards

Products Involved

ESPRITE® MegaPointe® Tarrantula™ BMFL™ Blade LEDBeam 100™
LEDWash 600X™

The Halberg Awards is the most prestigious event in New Zealand that celebrates the country's sporting excellence. The 2022 extravaganza was staged at the Spark Arena in Auckland, this time with a reduced live audience of 100 seated guests (usually 1000), a measure applied late-on as the country went to a Covid 'red alert' level. It broadcast live on Sky TV.

The set, lighting and visuals were designed collaboratively by LD Jason Steel working closely with Simon Garrett of Big Picture. The company delivered lighting and visual equipment, including the nearly 100 Robe fixtures utilised on the show.

The starting point for lighting the diamond-shaped stage was a dramatic and elegant 25 metre wide cross-shaped 6mm LED video surface, curving gently round at the ends, a monolithic structure that set the aesthetic tone and look of the event.

The stage was built with wings at 45-degrees and featured a large ramped central runway, and this sculptural architecture and minimalist design was a big move away from the projection-based concepts that characterised the show over the last decade.

It brought a fresh, crisp, contemporary vibe that looked classy in reality, and epic on camera for the show directed by Matt Quin and produced by Scott Cleater.

Big Picture has recently invested in Robe ESPRITES, MegaPointes and Tarrantulas, and this event was the first chance for Simon and Jason to properly use 20 x ESPRITES on a major live show.

With only 16 tables in the vast arena space, lighting and visuals played a major role in enhancing the dynamics and energy of the show, and in ensuring that this translated on camera, and therefore to the hundreds of thousands of TV viewers.

The ESPRITES were positioned on two chevron-shaped trusses above the stage, alternated with LEDWash 600s, and used for multiple tasks, from primary key lighting on the talent to washing the stage to illuminating two large banners down the room. They also worked well for creating cool gobo / breakup washes and animations above the tables which filled the arena for wide shots.

“The light output is great,” enthused Simon. “It’s strikingly flat and even, which meant we could save time on programming all the front washes and specials. They are very bright for the size, and we found we could cover the entire stage with only six lights! They were also great for picking out the banners and other core set elements needing accurate shuttering, so basically, GREAT workhorse fixtures ... that are also nice and quiet!”

With the trusses trimmed at 14 metres, with approximately a 20-metre throw distance, the ESPRITES delivered an impressive 140 footcandles at 5000K, which was pulled back to 80 footcandles for this telecast.

Simon noted multiple features in addition to the quietness which make ESPRITES ideal for broadcast, camera, and television environments.

Also in action on the 2022 Halberg Awards were 12 x Robe Tarrantula LED wash beams, 6 x BMFL Blades, 24 x MegaPointes, 16 x LEDBeam100s and 16 x LEDWash 600s, all running via a grandMA3 console programmed by Jason.

The 24 x MegaPointes were all on the floor, deployed in two offstage banks – left and right – and a linear row across the back, and utilized for power effects and beam work. The two angled banks of MegaPointes were each augmented by a row of little LEDBeam 100s further onstage mirroring the exact angle.

The Tarrantulas were on the back overhead truss where their fat beams and flower effects were perfect for reverse shot eye-candy. Together with the ESPRITES, MegaPointes and LEDWash 600s, they formed the backbone of the rig with the six BMFL Blades on the back upstage truss providing additional strong back light.

Other lights on the rig included 80 x LED pixel battens which supported the clean digital look created by the LED cross and the space around it.

A thought-through less-is-more approach proved that using these powerful tools creatively and judiciously can produce a much higher impact visual than just piling on the numbers!

Simon has been involved with the Halberg Awards for many years. It is named after Olympic champion Sir Murray Halberg and the event is a major fundraiser for The Halberg Foundation charity which enhances the lives of physically disabled New Zealanders by enabling them to participate in sport and recreation.

He joined Big Picture, part of the NEP Live Events group, 18 months ago, and the parent company then acquired leading New Zealand rental and production company, Spot-light Systems, at the end of 2021, bringing more Robe fixtures to the inventory to which the ESPRITES have just been added. Simon has always liked Robe's fixtures for being reliable, innovative, and cost-efficient.

The new lights were delivered by Jands, Robe's Australian and New Zealand distributor, with Simon commenting, "We all know the challenges presented by the global supply chain due to Covid, and it was great to see Jands and Robe working together to get the stock delivered to us."

Photo Credit: Deane Cohen





