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Montpellier Events chooses Robe

Products Involved

FORTE® **ESPRITE®** **T1 Profile™** **T1 Fresnel™**

Montpellier Events is the management company for The Corum Congress Centre – Berlioz Opera, a major event complex located in Montpellier, in the south of France. The venue hosts over 300 professional events each year including congresses, exhibitions, corporate events and conventions ... as well as live performances.

Equipped with three auditoriums – Berlioz Opera, Pasteur and Einstein – the venue has recently invested in Robe moving lights. In total, 46 x T1 Profiles, 20 x T1 Fresnels, 12 x ESPRITES and 10 x FORTES were supplied by Texen, a specialist in production technology integration and sales.

The 12 ESPRITES are permanently installed on the advanced catwalk of the 1995-capacity Berlioz Opera auditorium. They throw light over a distance of approximately 30 meters to the stage and are used for front and key lighting.

Built in 1990 from pink granite and metal, the venue hosts both entertainment events like concerts, operas, dance performances and one-person shows and professional gatherings such as congresses, conventions and gala dinners. Since opening, it has also served as a regular performance venue for the Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier. Shows staged there are renowned for their high production quality, and the auditorium is acclaimed for its exceptional acoustics.

Eighteen of the T1 Profiles are installed in the Pasteur auditorium (745 seats), while the remaining units are deployed on stage as needed.

A Transition to LED

Christophe Mora is the lighting manager at The Corum. He has worked there for five years in this position, and before then worked as a freelance lighting technician for 20 years, both in

France and internationally. He was hired for his expertise in moving lights and modern lighting systems, with the mission of guiding a smooth transition to LED technology, now mandated by French regulations.

The replacement of older moving lights began in 2020. Christophe carried out this mission with Philippe Pujol, a lighting expert who has been working at The Corum for 20 years and has in-depth knowledge of the venue's production requirements, configurations and technical practices.

High Standards for Equipment Selection

The two most important criteria in selecting these new lights were silent operation – a must for the Berlioz Opera auditorium, which hosts many opera and classical music performances – and colour rendering.

Several brands were evaluated. Christophe and Philippe, together with the full audiovisual team, conducted in-depth tests with each brand and consulted with their regular clients. They also analysed technical riders from hosted productions to identify the most frequently requested gear.

Sandra Vernier, CEO of Montpellier Events trusted her team's expertise to recommend the most suitable fixtures for the venue's needs.

"We took all these elements into account," explains Christophe. "Robe stood out for its low noise levels and excellent colour mixing, which drove our decision. Additionally, we were impressed by the zoom range and the smoothness of the dimming curves."

He adds: "It was a decision based on technical merit. These fixtures proved to be the best fit for our needs."

An Optimised Setup

The T1s were also selected for their light weight, making them easier for technicians to handle. All flight cases were customised by Texen, allowing them to be moved easily under catwalks and rigged quickly, saving time and reducing physical strain.

One major challenge in the Berlioz Opera auditorium was introducing these new lights to its many users.

“A lot of people dislike sudden changes,” noted Philippe. “So, we phased them in gradually, taking into account everyone’s needs, from opera technicians to lighting designers and other professionals who are used to specific colour tones and lighting styles.”

The Robe fixtures were delivered in batches by Robe France to Texen.

Now fully installed and in use, everyone is delighted, reports Christophe, adding that Robe, as a recognised brand, carries a strong trust factor.

A Significant Improvement in Production

The arrival of the Robe fixtures has greatly improved how shows and events are lit, as well as the turnaround times between different configurations. Lights no longer need to be dismantled and moved – only the scenery and staging elements are adjusted.

It is now possible to host a plenary congress session in the Berlioz Opera auditorium during the day and follow with a concert in the evening, with lighting that seamlessly adapts to both contexts.

Previously, the Pasteur auditorium required a full day to change over different setups – today, just a few hours are enough.

Christophe has been using Robe products since 2007, both in France and abroad, and appreciates their quality and functionality.

“I believe the Berlioz Opera auditorium now has exactly the lighting equipment it needs,” he says, adding that working with Texen – also based in Montpellier – was a real advantage. “The project ran extremely smoothly. They were a fantastic team to work with,” he affirmed.

In fact, Texen established a base in Montpellier as early as 1998 specifically to support The Corum and its three auditoriums. Since then, they’ve handled all technical and stage production needs for the venue, offering expertise, experience and high-quality service.

A Near-Complete Transition to LED

Today, 90% of the lighting in The Corum's auditoriums has transitioned to LED. A few traditional fixtures remain in the Opéra Berlioz control room, but they’re scheduled for replacement soon.

“The Corum Congress Centre – Berlioz Opera is one of the most important venues in Montpellier and the region. It’s an exceptional showcase for us – and for Robe,” says Nicolas Bellini, Sales Director at Texen.

His team worked closely with Jean-Marc Farre, Regional Sales Manager for Robe France (Grand Sud area), who helped finalise the deal and adds:

“Texen has been an excellent partner for us – on this project and many others involving Robe. There’s a strong synergy between our two companies.”

Jean-Marc highlights the quality and versatility of the three types of Robe fixtures installed, which meet the demands of even the most complex environments, where advanced functionality is key.

Following the installation of the T1 at Berlioz Opera, several other major opera houses in France followed suit, including the Royal Opera of Versailles and the renowned Opéra Bastille in Paris, both of which have also invested in Robe lighting.

More information about MONTPELLIER EVENTS:

MONTPELLIER EVENTS manages and operates, on behalf of Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole, two major venues: The Corum, Congress Centre – Berlioz Opera and Zénith SUD, Live Entertainment and Convention Hall.

With over 30 years of experience and a team of more than 50 professionals, the venues host more than 300 congresses, trade shows, events and performances every year, welcoming nearly 500,000 attendees. Certified ISO 20121.

<https://www.montpellier-events.com/en>

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