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Slovenian National TV Invests in Robe BMFL Follow Spots

Slovenian National Television (Radiotelevizija Slovenija - RTV) has invested in two Robe BMFL Blades complete with side-mounting LightMaster kits which enable the units to be used as manually operated follow spots in their studios and for OB productions.

It is their first Robe purchase - although they regularly use Robe Pointes, LEDWash 600s, LEDBeam 100 moving lights on cross hire for specific shows - and the units were delivered by MK Light Sound, Robe's Slovenian distributor.

The decision to purchase was made by Bojan Lenart, head of lighting and Bojan Repić, chief technologist for the broadcaster, together with others on their lighting team.

"There was absolutely no other product out there like this which has the side mounting control capabilities" commented Bojan Lenart, explaining that the mission started as a hunt for follow spots with the option to control some parameters via a lighting console if necessary but that could also be used as a standard follow spot.

The BMFL LightMaster is an accessory kit comprising externally mounted programmable follow spot handles, a control panel and two individual faders.

Available in either a side or back mounted option - side in this case - the handles have two programmable faders (which can control - for example - dimmer and iris), and then there is a LightMaster control panel with touch screen display and four programmable jog-wheels and ten assignable buttons, all fully-customizable by the operator.

The programmable buttons, jog-wheels and faders allow the operator to comfortably trigger and control dimmer, iris, focus, zoom, frost, colours or other features of the unit.

Alternatively, these can be controlled via the remote desk, or a combination of both.

Internal fixture settings on the LightMaster control panel allow pan/tilt movement behaviour to be tailored by adjusting tension, smoothness and resistance.

Mounting the LightMaster control unit on the back or side of the BMFL is quick and straightforward, achieved via quarter turn locking screws, and the control panel is connected to the unit via USB.

RTV initially looked at conventional follow spots, however the big deciding factor was that the BMFL Blade is a multifunctional luminaire, so if they want to use the fixtures for something else - like key lighting or as part of a moving light rig - they also have the option to integrate it into the stage or studio lighting system.

The BMFL Follow Spots have been in action on a variety of programmes, including their Eurovision selection series and a large New Year's Eve event in Maribor Arena.

"We're very happy with the BMFLs – they are more than powerful enough for our needs, and even when running in 'silent' mode at lower brightness, we still have more than enough brightness for front lighting and highlighting performers" said Bojan Lenart.

Both Bojans have worked at RTV for over 25 years.... and in that time, have seen lighting techniques and the technologies change dramatically. The lighting repository... deep in the bowels of the main studios complex in central Ljubljana, is a large cluttered space that is meticulously neat and organised, complete with a fascinating museum-style section, featuring some carefully preserved pieces of old technology – luminaires, bulbs and control gear.

Whenever new kit is purchased and older kit retired, a sample is retained for posterity!

The lighting department has a three-tier hierarchy – lighting 'masters', lighting operators and technicians, and they will design the lighting for some shows and work with exterior LDs and directors on others.

A full and diverse range of original and franchised programmes is produced from scratch – from news to reality TV and there are also RTV facilities in the cities of Koper and Maribor.

Photo Credit: Louise Stickland

