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Under the Blood Moon with Cold Chisel

Products Involved

BMFL™ Blade BMFL™ WashBeam MegaPointe®

In February, before the worldwide lockdown to beat Covid-19 came into force, Robe's reporting team were in Australia – which had just been engulfed by the worst bushfires for many years - and captured a historic musical moment in time ...

The rain pelted down relentlessly for the final gig of legendary Australian pub-rock phenomenon Cold Chisel's 2020 tour at Sirromet Winery just outside Brisbane in Queensland. This hugely welcomed metrological miracle capped an emotional evening and helped to finally extinguish most of the remaining uncontained fires raging from Australia's disastrous 2019-20 'bushfire season', leaving the land a scorched reminder to the need for urgent climate change action!

The tour's lighting was designed by Cold Chisel's long term LD Jeff Pavey who put Robe moving lights at the centre of the 'big rock look' he crafted to perfection for one of Australia's most iconic and best-loved bands whose prolific career has spanned five decades.

Defining the look onstage were 40 x Robe MegaPointes and 11 x BMFL Blades supplied by Gold Coast rental company Creative Productions, together with LED wash lights, weatherised beam lights, 2-lite LED blinders and 4-lite tungsten blinders.

Pavey has been involved with lighting frontman Jimmy Barnes' solo performances and various creative projects including Cold Chisel for around 30 years, and he's every bit as passionate about 'the show' now as he was at the start!

He's seen the technology change dramatically over that time ... but the principle of providing classic show lighting has remained fundamentally the same ... Lots of big bold looks, clear and defined colours, stark and edgy whites, dramatic contrasts and ballsy attitude ... to match Barnes' and Cold Chisel's incredible energy.

All 25 shows on the tour this year were outdoors, with the standard rig designed to fit into a 22-metre-wide, 16-metre-deep Clifton Productions' stage with around 15 metres of headroom. Four straight trusses in the roof were flown at slightly different heights complemented by eight side trusses – four per side – that gave excellent cross stage lighting positions and coverage for solos.

"Most of the things I do are pretty straightforward," quips Pavey with reference to his minimal no-nonsense style.

For him, it's a critical thing to get a good balance of lights that can be grouped and unfolded in layers to present the bigger picture.

A large 12 metre wide by 6 metre high LED screen dominated the upstage area – also supplied by Creative Productions – and this was one of the reasons that Pavey chose MegaPointes for their main effects fixtures – for their power, punch and ability to slice through the LED, plus the near-infinite variety of looks that can be created.

Six of the BMFL WashBeams were on the front truss and linked into two remote follow spot control systems, with three on the upstage truss linked into a third remote spotting system. The other two fixtures were on the mid truss and concentrated on key-lighting the drum and keyboard riser positions.

The MegaPointes were distributed on all overhead and side trusses and they were the heart of the rig, helping to create all those epic rock looks.

“MegaPointes are my favourite moving light of the last decade,” Pavey declares. “They are multi-purpose fixtures that actually do work properly in more than one mode!”

While brightness is a major asset, he embraces all the other MegaPointe features throughout the show ... and the expedient size means he can pack a few more on the truck when possible!

Creative Productions currently owns 48 x MegaPointes which are out on shows and events most of the time, and they are about to increase the stock again.

The band like those classic big AC / DC and Queen power looks from the 1980s with gazillions of PAR cans ... so his objective on this tour was to recreate the spirit and scale of this aesthetic in a modern context ... and with considerably fewer lights, all of which had to fit into a single truck!

Pavey achieved this goal combining his vast experience as an LD and huge enthusiasm for the music ... a loud mix of defiance, the gritty side of life and superlative rock 'n' roll.

Cold Chisel shows have not always featured video prominently, but used judiciously and intelligently on this tour, it helped ensure the focus remained on the band and the music at all times, with a healthy visual harmony and rhythm between it and the lighting.

Custom playback content was created by Rachael Johnson and Dave Hendy's raw and masterful camera mix hit the Cold Chisel spot!

Pavey programmed and operated the lights using his trusty Hog 4 console and was joined on the road by a “fantastic” Creative Productions crew of Jeremy Dehn, John Penridge and Declan Woods.

Photo Credit: Louise stickland





