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Shoreline City Church Celebrates Christmas in Style

Products Involved

BMFL™ Blade **BMFL™ WashBeam** **BMFL™ FollowSpot** **RoboSpot™**

Shoreline City Church (SCC) held a fully social distanced and masked Covid-safe Christmas Eve service and celebration at the American Airlines Center (AAC) in Dallas which featured a diversity of performances by multiple artists and a flurry of different vocalists from the church, all backed by their highly talented house band.

They wanted stunning visuals and high production values for this special occasion – arena shows are still a rarity whilst the pandemic continues – and so asked Josh Beard and Jacob Vanvlymen from Houston, Texas-based production design specialist Visual Edge to create a memorable production design.

They chose Robe BMFL moving lights – a mix of BMFL Blades, BMFL WashBeams and BMFL FollowSpots – to be at the core of the lighting rig.

Visual Edge was initially asked to present some design ideas which would incorporate lighting and video by SCC's technical director Jeremy Hix. Three concepts were presented and one selected in which automation was also central to the design.

Taking into account the idiosyncrasies of a socially distanced audience, Josh and Jacob knew the importance of the design being “immersive” and able to reach out and touch everyone in the room, transferring the energy and action of everything happening onstage.

Automation helped achieve this, allowing completed shifts in the stage architecture and plenty of visual surprises that could be revealed throughout the event.

Movement also enabled “supersizing” the rig at key moments to make the environment look and feel huge, sweeping everyone up and into it. Furthermore, working in conjunction with a large ‘blow-through’ LED screen upstage, it helped create a series of unique performance spaces to highlight the different artists.

BMFLs were chosen for their power, dynamics, and multiple features. “We knew they would work perfectly for the job, so it was really a no brainer,” stated Jacob, adding that he and Josh were also keen on having continuity across the fixtures, hence the selection of the three different types of BMFL.

Most of the 30 x BMFL Blades were rigged on the “ribs”, a series of six over-stage trusses, three flown each side of a central upstage / downstage truss, all of which were on motors as part of the automation system. These BMFLs were the primary spot fixtures on the rig, and in addition to their multifunctionality, were powerful enough for the large throw distances needed when the trusses were in certain positions.

The remaining BMFL Blades were positioned on the key lighting truss hung out over the audience.

The eight BMFL WashBeams were deployed on the upstage part of the super-grid, where they were ideal for strong artist back light, matching perfectly in quality, texture, and light output with the BMFL Blades.

The four BMFL FollowSpots were all on the key lighting truss.

“We loved the idea of not using conventional arena follow spots,” explained Jacob, “so the RoboSpot option was a great solution that worked flawlessly”. It also allowed the operators to focus fully on following the artists without any distractions.

The BMFL FollowSpots were operated via four RoboSpot BaseStations located just behind the stage, with comms to FOH key light operator Ian Berkman who ensured that levels were tweaked and adjusted as needed.

Josh commented generally that he thinks Robe is “a very solid” brand with several signature product lines “that speak for themselves” which he thinks is a great recommendation for any lighting designer.

Lighting for the event was controlled via four grandMA2 consoles – two live and two backups – programmed by Josh, and operated by him and Ian Berkman, who between them lit the complete lineup. Before arriving on site, they had completed a couple of weeks in pre-viz.

Jacob comments that it was “simply fantastic” for the Visual Edge team, all the crew and in fact everyone involved in making this show happen to be back working in an arena after a year that has been seriously interrupted and disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Related to that, he said that almost everyone at some point had to 'take a moment' to recalibrate and realize that they were back working a full-size, full production, full-on show, which was a huge success, a great morale boost and enthusiastically enjoyed by everyone in the AAC.

The lighting vendor was Upstaging. The event's production manager was Jonathan Woelfel and video, and audio was supplied by DPS and Deep South Production respectively.

Despite 2020 being a crazy and challenging year, Visual Edge has expanded its team of creative and design specialists and is looking forward to working on some cool projects this year.

Photo Credit: Danilo Lewis





