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Cankarjev Dom Boosts Robe stock

Cankarjev Dom – Slovenia's biggest and busiest cultural and congress centre - has added Robe Spiiders, plus more BMFLs Blades and CycFX8s to its already extensive stock of Robe moving lights which also includes Pointes. They now have around 150 units.

The largest of five performance venues in the Cankarjev Dom complex is the 1650 capacity Concert Hall and in addition to these are the foyers and two galleries and conference rooms also used for events. It's both a co-producing and a receiving house staging a wide variety of shows, events all year round, from opera to dance, popular music to choral, orchestra to drama ... and everything in between. Some venues and spaces are also hired out for corporate events and conferences. Each venue has its own lighting rig and all of them need dynamic and flexible lighting to deal with the diverse programming, however some kit is also moved between spaces as and when needed. Adaptability is why they first started looking at Robe, all the way back in 2002, and the inventory has been built steadily over the years since then via an excellent and long standing relationship with Robe's Slovenian distributor, MK Light Sound.

This latest investment in BMFL Blades, Robe's signature high-powered range, was the second for these specific luminaires. It came after the initial batch purchased for the largest Gallus Hall, proved themselves invaluable!

The most recent lighting purchases are part of ongoing investments which ensure that the 70% state funded and 30% self-funded organisation keeps moving with the times and is able to offer its wide roster of shows the best possible production values.

They had been looking at BMFLS for some time explained Technical Director Karmen Klučar, who has been working there for 25 years in different roles, the last nine in the top slot. Karmen oversees a technical and maintenance department of 75 people.

She recalls that the requirement initially arose for a super-bright fixture with shutters for a production of "Othello" staged in 2016 with lighting designed by Andrej Hadnjak. The time was right to make the first BMFL purchase.

They considered BMFL Blades and a competitor product ... And chose BMFL!

"It's hugely powerful and properly multifunctional" says Carmen "as well as being very easy to use and work. The animation wheels are excellent and the big zoom range is exactly what we needed. For what it does, the size is compact and the weight low".

Essentially it ticked all their boxes!

Shutters are a must-have for drama performances and fixtures in the main hall need to be bright to register on the stage from a standard trim height of 10 or 11 metres.

Lighting technician Lovro Jevšek also likes the zoom along with the “fabulous” colour mixing, the animation wheels and the “great” gobos. They are now used on almost every show.

The Cankarjev Dom’s BMFLs and Pointes are packaged into neat 4-way dollies so they can be easily moved around to different parts of the complex.

The eight new CycFX 8s were purchased for their brightness, the range of colours that can be created with the RGBW mixing and using the CTO filters.

They are ideal for a multi-purpose performance space like this. “We used them for cyc lights, front lights – for which they are a great choice, set illumination and also for effects,” Karmen explained.

“There are so many possibilities”.

In 2016, more Pointes were added to the first batch purchased in 2014. Also being a true hybrid, they have been among the most popular fixtures in the building ... and are constantly in demand.

The 10 x Spiiders are the first of this particular fixture in the building, and they have already proved their worth in the main auditorium as premium quality rich wash fixtures, with additional effects if needed.

Having committed to one brand of moving light, it has made sense over the years to stay with Robe because everyone is happy, it’s ideal to have a continuity, and also, adds Karmen, with Robe being so strong in the Slovenian rental market, if they need additional fixtures for a specific show, they can usually be sourced quickly and easily.

Across all the venues and galleries, nearly 1100 cultural events are staged annually at Cankarjev Dom, plus over 1000 congress events, including the Slovene Book Fair which alone spawns about 350 events. Altogether, the combined venues are estimated to attract over 480,000 visitors to the attractive Slovenian capital and it’s a big part of the fabric and society of this vibrant city.

With up to 20 shows a month in peak season on the Main Stage alone, the pace is hectic!

The turnaround times are always pressured with 80 per cent of productions in and out the same day, so reliable moving lights really are essential to meet these schedules and the standards of excellence that Cankarjev Dom is committed to deliver.

Cankarjev Dom is named after writer and playwright Ivan Cankar. The building in the centre of Ljubljana was designed by leading Slovenian architect Edvard Ravnikar and opened in 1982, complete with a large basement area that is fortified to withstand a nuclear attack. It also houses an impressive set of hydraulic stage machinery that can transform the Main Hall playing space.



