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Joker Out for Robe

Slovenian indie rockers Joker Out are the hottest musical act of the moment in this lively, beautiful, and dynamic European country! Formed in 2016, 2023 has been a mega-busy year with lots of touring shows, representing Slovenia at the Eurovision Song Contest in the UK, and recently playing a show-stopping sold-out performance at Ljubljana's biggest arena venue, Stožice ... which was lit by Klemen Krajnc, part of the Blackout design studio.

This was an all-Robe moving light rig - with 100 Robe luminaires breaking down as 32 x MegaPointes, 64 x Spiiders, 19 x LEDBeam 150s and 13 x FORTES plus a quantity of strobes and LED floods. Klemen has worked with the band since 2021 when he was asked to light the launch of their first album, Umazane misli.

Robe is always his go-to moving light brand, and it's a popular choice for all his Blackout LD colleagues including Crt Birsa who is another big Robe advocate from Slovenia. Robe's success in this region is also in part due to the very proactive approach by Slovenian distributor, MK Light Sound in getting Robe out there in so many different contexts.

The starting point for this gig was the LED screens when the band chose a direction on this, which was that they wanted a semi-circular upstage screen to define the stage space, he followed on with the lighting.

The upstage screen was masked into an elegant semi-circle, and in front of that was a semi-circular truss, with 12 floating 'finger' trusses in the upstage / downstage orientation - eight above and two per side - providing the overhead lighting, all of which looked a lot more interesting than a regular rectangular design.

The stage also had a front thrust allowing the band to get close up with their very enthusiastic fans.

They wanted four follow spots for the mobile members of the band and one static one for the drummer rigged on the venue's own rectangular truss. Initially he'd specified Robe BMFL WashBeams for this, but as lighting contactor Intralite had recently invested in FORTES, when they were offered for this gig, Klemen jumped at the chance!

"I was super impressed," he reiterated.

Four of the FORTES were located on camera platforms at the back of the arena and - fitted with the special handles - used as manual follow spots. Klemen ran all parameters from the desk so the operators were free to concentrate just on getting smooth and nice movement.

Eight more FORTES were rigged on trussing flown in the middle of the venue, used for front and key lighting, with another single upstage centre for back lighting the singer.

Klemen has used FORTES before on some corporate shows, so he knew that they were "amazing lights" but having them on a concert like this really assisted how he could light the show.

The 19 x LEDBeam 150s were rigged on the back side of the half-circular truss framing the screen where they were great for piercing beam effects and for pointing up and illuminating the architecture of the finger trusses and of the semi-circular truss itself.

The 32 x MegaPointes were divided into two sets of 16. The first set was positioned upstage on the deck for firing through powerful effects, with the second on the half circle truss, providing fat back spot beams from this higher position. Klemen loves MegaPointes and Pointes, both are also a go-to fixture him, but only the more powerful MegaPointe was used on this show.

He reckons Spiiders are still "the best" LED washes right now and loves their fat beams but also the clarity and definition of the edges which he thinks far surpass that of any other LED wash beam fixture. He appreciates the added flexibility of being able to use the LED rings for completely different effects and looks.

Three Spiiders were rigged on each of the finger trusses, with another 8 luminaires a side lining the catwalk, plus another 24 on the mid-venue rectangular house truss.

While it wasn't a massive rig for the profile of the show or the size of the venue, Klemen is very aware that the design was "completely appropriate" and enabled him to achieve all the desired creative goals for the band. Each light worked hard and had to be multifunctional and efficient.

He programmed and operated the lighting himself and enjoyed the show as he does all Joker Out shows for the energy and zeal that goes into their live performance. "They know how to entertain and put on a great show for fans," he noted, "and it's brilliant to be working in this environment."

The half circle truss design made it a little challenging to get some optimal lighting positions, but nothing that could not be overcome by some smart positioning and rigging, explained Klemen. Naturally, being a one-day event with very little time for any programming on site, he made the most of visualisation tools and opportunities.

The show was recorded for possible future broadcast, and was a huge success, generating multiple positive comments and messages on the content and how everything looked.

Photo Credit: Crt Birsa, Matic Kutin





