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BMFLs Perform at 2016 Halberg Awards

Products Involved

BMFL™ Spot **Pointe®**

Spectacular for lighting the 53rd Halberg Awards - recognising New Zealand's top sporting achievements - was a collaboration between the event's lighting, audio and LED screens supplier, Oceania, broadcast partner OSB and broadcaster SKY TV which runs the show and manages content for the three-hour live telecast.

Thirty Robe BMFL Spots and 20 x Pointes graced the lighting rig this year among other fixtures, all of which were rigged in the Vector Arena, Auckland.

The red carpet came alive with the great and the good of New Zealand's sporting community 1400 of whom rocked up for the occasion to see the All Blacks rugby team, cricketers Kane Williamson and Brendon McCullum, golfer Lydia Ko, all Blacks coach Steve Hansen and many more collect their prizes and accolades during a fun and emotion filled evening.

The BMFL Spots were right at the heart of the lighting scheme which in turn was part of an impressive overall event production design produced by Steve Shields for Sky TV.

Simon Garrett and Jeremy Fern headed the design team for Oceania. The process started soon after the previous year's event with ideas being kicked around by Steve and SKY director Eric Lazayres. In early spring these were put on paper and they met again as a larger group which included Halberg Trust CEO Grant McCabe and the event's technical director "Vision", Andrew Mills.

Simon has been involved at the sharp end of the Halberg Awards broadcast for the last six years and has seen the lighting elements evolve and grow. Initially he was brought in when the then-smaller, AV-based event moved from the SKY Casino ballroom to the Vector Arena which, at 85 metres long, with a 39-metre-wide performance and working space and a 19-metre trim was considerably larger.

Essential to the aesthetic brief was creating a series of stunning signature looks for the room that could be captured on camera, for long shots, reverse shots from the stage, back of camera impressions, etc. For which the lighting had to look dynamic from all angles.

This was why BMFL Spots were chosen.

Auckland based Oceania was the first rental company in the country to invest in Robe's game-changing BMFL technology, delivered by Australian and New Zealand distributor the ULA Group ... and since that time, their 32 x BMFL Spots have been out constantly on a wide variety of jobs.

"This event is a HUGE deal for our NZ pride," noted Simon "so we really like to pull out all the stops and show what can be achieved on a budget with smart high impact production. It needed to have a WOW factor for everyone's arrival, be unmistakeable to the live audience and with enough depth and definition to ensure interesting shots from all 12 camera angles for the duration of the Awards presentations and broadcast".

He reckons that many broadcast shows are compromised from the live-audience point of view, delivering a stronger look onscreen, but with a VIP guest list like the Halberg Awards, the show must deliver just as well in reality to all eyes in the room.

Simon believes in "arrival". He reckons that guests decide early, based on initial impressions, if the event will be a great night ... or not. Essential to the Halbergs look brief was creating a series of fabulous signature big-room looks to make the audience feel special, as well as providing interesting backgrounds for the multiple camera angles. Noting that while delivering a contrast for depth purposes, the lighting must always be sympathetic to skin tones.

Oceania's Jeremy Fern had a lot of input into the updated show, set and backdrop which comprised projection and LED panels bordered with truss and lighting elements, all centred around a 6m x 12m high tower of 4.5 mm LED rigged in portrait format which split in two to create a presenter entrance on demand.

Flanking this panel were a pair of 24ft 16:9 IMAG projection screens fed by 20k Christie machines, and filling the void beneath were 10 vertical towers clad with 12mm pitch VuePix LED mesh, tapering in size.

The BMFLs "Were a natural fit with high powered LED look as the punch helped frame and join these substantial video elements onstage" explained Simon.

He also revealed that the BMFLs have delivered on the promise providing a myriad of imaginative options as well as a bright workhorse. He's "Truly impressed" at the extended lamp life and the lack of degradation - even when they replaced them after 1000 hours of operation, the bulbs looked "like they could do another 300 hours!"

As with any rental operation, reliability and rapid ROI are keys, and after 16 months, Oceania is very happy.

"They are compact, light, fast and bright ... and seem to be handling our mix of short turn-around shows and being trucked over rough roads easily as well as dealing easily with humidity and high temperatures.

In addition to the 30 x BMFL Spots - dotted around on three V-shaped trusses over the audience with eight on an upstage truss - 20 x Pointes were on the show together with other lights.

Pointes were another fixture ideal for the job - being small, bright and versatile with a large zoom. Here at the Halbergs they highlighted the audience during the awards presentations and created more static backgrounds using a variety of beams, an approach that's fashionable on TV right now.

The colour correction is effective and accurate so "adding contrast or subtlety to the mix of uncorrected tungsten gobos, Molefay Duets and 1000w cyc lights used to create a soft classical audience wash look is simple" declares Simon.

The grandMA2 console was programmed and operated on the night by Oceania's Joel Stanners who enjoys working with BMFLs immensely. "They are definitely the fixture I like most at the moment - brightness wise, there's nothing that can complete with them, the colours and gobos are great ... and they're really fast".

He's now taking 16 x BMFL Spots out on a month long arena tour for classical / pop crossover group Sol3 Mio for which he is the LD and will be using them as the main source on the rig, maximising the animation wheels and numerous creative options he has for lighting this very specific performance genre.

About the Halberg Awards

The Awards - named after athlete Sir Murray Halberg - help the Halberg Disability Sport Foundation to raise funds that are used to enhance the lives of physically disabled young people, their families and communities, by enabling them to participate in sport.

Photo Credit: Deane Cohen





