



All Aboard with Claypaky at Eurovision Song Contest 2018

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Lisbon, Portugal - The 2018 Eurovision Song Contest (ESC), hosted at the Altice Arena in Lisbon, Portugal, saw the latest range of Claypaky and ADB lighting fixtures dominate the beautifully evocative, multi-dimensional, theatrical and camera pleasing lighting design by award-winning lighting designer and Director of Photography (DOP) Jerry Appelt.



A statement against the often flattening overuse of video in entertainment presentations, Appelt's design is one of the biggest lighting set-ups in Eurovision history. Appelt employed over 2,000 lighting fixtures - 750 of which were Claypaky Arc and LED moving heads and 100 of which were the ADB asymmetric cyc LED fixture, ADB Klematis. All lighting was supplied to ESC by Ampco Flashlight and Pixellight.



Appelt, lighting his fourth ESC, worked in close creative collaboration with set designer Florian Wieder to deliver a stunning, multi-faceted stage canvas that beautifully echoed Portugal's nautical heritage, while offering a remarkable level of visual versatility. In addition, the design directly addressed the comments from last year's winner, Salvador Sobral, who said: "Music is not fireworks, music is a feeling, so let's try to change this and bring music back!"



Appelt's shrewd positioning and programming of the Claypaky arsenal enhanced, defined and shaped the various layers and areas of the set to deliver a striking succession of evocative and sculptural lighting looks. This, combined with carefully choreographed moving trusses and beat-perfect camera work, ensured each country's story was told with a refreshing depth and sensitivity.



With a mission to revive the physicality, emotion, meaning and intimacy of ESC with lighting, Appelt demanded a versatile workhorse fixture that would offer maximum choice: "I was looking to create dimension, not just from my fixture positioning but also from the feature set of each fixture itself. I also wanted consistency of output and colour across every part of the stage, so I chose to use a number of the multipurpose fixtures from the Claypaky range - primarily the Claypaky Scenius Unico, the new Claypaky Hepikos and the Claypaky Mythos 2."



Making its ESC debut this year, Appelt used the Hepikos to project dramatic aerial beams and stunning colour effects from the huge arching trusses above the stage, bringing another layer of drama to the wider camera shots. Appelt discusses, "The Hepikos is a super-bright beam-wash fixture that produces piercing, intense beams. It's a hybrid fixture, which gives me equally effective 'beam' and 'wash' lights in one fixture. Its primary use was to frame the huge curved trusses above the stage with aerial beams. In addition, I used the interchangeable rotating prism to break the light beam up into several dynamic projections, bringing further dimension to the overall picture."



ESC head of production Ola Melzig adds, "The Hepikos' offers top-notch performance and unswerving colour matching with the other products we are using from the Claypaky range. All the fixtures are camera friendly and their relative compact size and low operating power consumption keeps costs down. This is crucial on a show that can run lighting for up to 18 hours a day, every day, for over a month of rehearsals and broadcasts."



Also debuting on ESC was the Claypaky Axicor 900 range of LED fixtures: "I'm using these fixtures for the all-important performer key light and as a supplement to the followspots," continues Appelt. "The Axicor 900 is ideal as a key light, but it is also an additional tool in my creative arsenal as the ability to project and shape the beam means I can use the fixtures for other purposes as well."

As with ESC 2017 in Kyiv, Appelt's main workhorse fixture is the Claypaky Scenius Unico: "I look for workhorse fixtures that can perform the role of two, maybe even three different types of fixture, without compromising colour, output, mechanical precision or effects," stresses Appelt. "The Scenius Unico is one of my favourite solutions because of its reliability and versatility; it can be a spot, a wash or a beam light. It's also high output and relatively compact in size and weight which makes it ideal when we need to use so many fixtures."



Over 12,000 people enjoyed three spectacular live broadcasts from Lisbon's Altice Arena, while over 200 million viewers tuned in on television on Final night with many more millions watching online. The final 26 acts put on a remarkable show for both the live audience and the cameras, but it was Israel's Netta Barzilai who was the ultimate winner with her catchy pop anthem, *Toy*.