Anolis for Prestige City of Dijon Lighting Installation

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Over 200 Anolis Calumma S and XS and Eminere Remote 1, 2, 3 and 4 LED lighting fixtures were specified for an eye-catching new architectural lighting installation at the Palais des Ducs et des Etats de Bourgogne (Town Hall) in Dijon, France.

The project was titled “Les reflets de l’Or” (reflections of Gold) and sees the Town Hall, Philippe le Bon Tower and the Saint-Michel church of this outstanding architectural complex highlighted in subtle and elegant light.

The project realisation was a fine balance of talented collaborators, including Lighting designers Johan Sustrac and Saffran Popille from Distylight; and Pierre Roussel from architects Godart + Roussel Architectes.

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The installation was completed by electrical engineering specialist DEMONGEOT, project managed for them Thomas Marques-Faria, and the lighting programmers were Tom Marchandiau and Anthony Sauvet from APS & CO.

The project’s history dates to 2017 when the city of Dijon launched a competition to illuminate the Liberté pedestrian shopping street in the historic city centre.

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Parisian agency, Distylight won this from the artistic and heritage enhancement context, while Dijon-based practice, Godart + Roussel Architectes, were the public’s favourite.

A few years later, the Direction gestion connectée de l’espace public – GCEP – of Dijon invited tenders for a lighting trail in the city centre.

Working together, Distylight and Godart + Roussel Architectes then formulated the lighting project “Les reflets de l’Or” proposing a complete illuminated walk linking five of the city’s key architectural landmarks.

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Johan Sustrac explained how they pushed for the lighting trial to be more than just a trial. The idea was that this should be a permanent lighting scheme that was additionally available for civic events, however certain global events overtook the process, resulting in budgetary restrictions, and the scale was revised to initially light three monuments – the Palace of the Dukes and States of Burgundy, including the Philippe le Bon tower, the Saint-Michel church and the Porte Guillaume.

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Pierre Roussel from the lighting project team noted that the suggestion of highlighting the Burgundy Stone in warm ochre and gold hues had appealed to Pierre Pribetich, the former Dijon urban planning deputy who wanted to see classy lighting linked to the local heritage.

This was achieved by mixing RGBW colours in warm white at around 2200 K.

To evoke the golden reflections, Distylight’s Saffran Popille chose a custom colour mix. “The shade we needed to make the stone pop out had to work with 2200 K, rather than be an amber LED so this is linked to the lighting’s chromatic spectrum.”

Distylight founder Johan Sustrac elucidated how they researched and tested several options before making the final decision and choosing the best and most appropriate fixtures and suppliers.

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“What we really liked about Anolis,” stated Johan, “was the quality of the colour mixing, and each time we asked the team from Robe France to add a little green or a touch of pink, they knew exactly how to do it, and obtained exactly the colour and detail we needed.”

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Once the 97 x Anolis Calumma S and XS and 110 x Eminere Remote 1, 2, 3 and 4s were selected, they were positioned on and around the three monuments using a variable white mix between 2,200 K – 3,000 K plus a custom RGBCW mix created by Anolis specifically for this project.

This LD’s choice makes all the difference compared to how a classic RGB illumination of the stone might have looked!

One hundred and thirty Anolis fixtures in total are focussed on the Palace of the Dukes of Burgundy, plus two automatic projectors and 4 x 30,000 lumen video projectors for the three sides of the town hall. Eight gobo projectors are used on the Saint-Michel church to project occasional images and as kinetic illuminations on the facade.

Johan observed that the combination of lighting and video projection provided a perfect solution to cover the building elements exactly as they envisioned.

Pierre Roussel highlighted the role of Dijon city’s technical services team headed by Patrick Dubois, who gave much of their time and several weekends to ensure the installation ran smoothly and on time.

The city had already purchased a lighting console for the festive lighting for which they needed a specialist programmer, so Anthony Sauvet was sourced for this task thanks to APS & CO’s Tom Marchandiau’s extensive address book.

Tom explained that all the Anolis products were addressed in RDM mainly using a City Theatrical DMXcat to rename more than 200 fixtures enabling remote observation and control as the lighting console is tucked away in a closed room without windows!

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The three illuminated buildings are connected to the lighting console by two Ethernet / DMX nodes: one for the Palace and the other near the Saint-Michel church. A fibre optic cable allows execution of Art-Net control commands quickly, over the approximately 500-metre distance.

The Anolis LED projectors are controlled with 4 x DMX parameters allowing independent control of the individual R, G, B and W pixels for each luminaire.

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Despite the complexity of the systems implemented, the installation had to remain manageable for all those involved, including remotely so a screen interface was created via a Modulo Pi media server that simplified the system for intuitive day-to-day use by City of Dijon staff and managers.

Anolis’ Julien Thery also provided comprehensive on-site support throughout the project.

The installation is active all year round, running with a signature look devised by Distylight based on the reflections of Gold.

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The facades will illuminate and come to life between two and four times per hour for 5 minutes depending on the season in a subtle combination of soft video projection, golden waves and delicate movements programmed into the Anolis fixtures and architectural devices on the façade, flickering with a variation of whites and intensity.

The new lighting scheme was inaugurated by the mayor of Dijon, Nathalie Koenders, alongside the first vice-president of the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region, Michel Neugnot.

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