

# BMFLS for Simple Minds Big Music Tour

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Robe BMFL Spot moving lights created a huge impact for the arena section of Simple Minds' "Big Music" tour for which lighting designer Stephen Pollard expanded and scaled up the stage set and lighting rig he used in theatre venues last year. **Photos : Edward Fielding**

Leading UK lighting and visuals rental company HSL invested in 50 x new Robe BMFL Spots just before the tour went out, 24 of which were used by Steve.

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While Simple Minds won worldwide fame, recognition and built a resolute fan base with their massive rock anthems and maverick stadium performances of the 1980s and early 1990s, the roots of their music is altogether moodier, darker and more sinister. The underlining vibe of Big Music unites this rawness with some of the more traditional largeness that might be expected from the band's 17<sup>th</sup> studio album ... which was also their first in 5 years.

The tour was a great success. Fans loved the new material and enjoyed the 'greats' on the set list. Especially on the arena dates, WOW factors were important to accentuate the confidence of this musical approach, and this is why Steve chose BMFL Spots.



"I basically needed a bright, big, bad-ASS light that would cut through everything – including video – and BMFL was it!"

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Much of the show was about beam-work so the BMFL Spots were ideal for creating beam 'structures' and frameworks as well as for those all-encompassing gobo sweeps, for which they were fitted with custom gobos tailored to Steve's design.

"The saturated colours are amazing," commented Steve. "Saturated reds, greens and all those hues that are hard to get a properly bright look from ... are just incredible on the BMFL!"

The rig comprised three curved trusses. 20 x BMFLs were positioned on the main truss which also had 8 video 'drops'. This main truss also supported six vertical sub-hung trusses fitted with various scaffolding and accessories that enabled Steve to hang the fixtures at different levels.

Six BMFLs were out rigged from the top of the main truss, another 12 were positioned on the sub hung trusses between the video drops with four BMFL Spots upstage of the stage set on the floor.

Positioned like this, they enabled Steve to create symmetrical layers of light which could change into random lighting chaos at the press of a button, which fitted the edgy, visually deconstructed aesthetic that worked well with the video product positioned between the lighting drops.

A strong curved element ran through the set and lighting design making it suggestively feminine to celebrate the "two extremely strong women" - Sarah Brown and Catharine A.D. - in the band line up, which also gave the latest Simple Minds live sound something new, fresh and different.

"I wanted the whole design to have a feminine aura," explained Steve, "BUT with attitude ... not fluffy or clichéd," he added quickly!

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Aside from the creative flair that the intense beams and gobo patterns of the BMFL Spots brought to the equation, the units were extremely reliable as well as great fun to use and to programme confirms Steve, who ran a show from a grandMA full size.

Simon Stuart from HSL is also delighted with the BMFL Spot purchase, something he'd been contemplating for a while. "BMFLs are getting requested more frequently and are now being specified on riders constantly" he says, "so the time was right for us as a rental company... and in addition to that, they helped Steve create a fantastic and very exciting looking show".