

# First Robe BMFLs Tour UK with Gaslight Anthem

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*Photo credit: Louise Stickland*

The first of Robe's new BMFL Spot fixtures to tour in the UK were specified by Boston based lighting designer Jeff Maker for the recent Gaslight Anthem tour ... for which they were purchased by Leeds based rental company Zig Zag Lighting.

Jeff - whose CV includes imaginative lighting for several cool 'alternative' bands including All Time Low - presented his first lighting design for the US punk rockers who kicked off their ""Get Hurt"" album campaign. He was recommended for the gig for his creative flair by FOH sound engineer Joe Amato, who also mixes All Time Low.

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Jeff has worked with Zig Zag on several previous occasions, and they are his rental company of choice for the UK and Europe. Both Jeff and Zig Zag's Neil Hunt were thrilled to be involved with the first UK tour to use the BMFL Spots.

Neil was already seriously thinking about committing to a first batch of BMFL Spot fixtures, so when they were confirmed for the Gaslight Anthem tour, he went straight ahead and placed the order with Robe UK.

“Essentially I needed a super-bright fixture to use on large spec shows that often have a high video or bright LED elements. Various fixtures appear on lighting plots – but BMFL is the first one that ticks all the boxes without compromise!”



Jeff had seen BMFLs for the first time at the Boston launch event in September ... and decided to

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spec them for the tour.

He also utilised 18 x Pointes, 16 x LEDBeam 100s, six ROBIN 600E Spots, 8 x CycFX 8s and 12 x LEDWash 600s.

Jeff's starting Point for the Gaslight Anthem design was listening to the band's materials which energised base triggers like colours, movement style and overall 'vibe'. "I let the music paint the initial pictures in my mind - it all started form there," he explains.

His idea for the trussing structure stemmed from the upside down heart of the album logo, and this translated into a 'shattered heart' of trussing pieces which included - in this UK variation - two straight trusses, two angled wing trusses and a V-shaped mid-truss, together with eight vertical sections on floor bases which added still more dynamics to the picture.



The upstage truss was loaded with eight BMFL Spots six LEDBeam 100s, four strobes and toned with LED PARs.

The mid truss featured 10 x Pointes, six LEDBeam 100s and four strobes, while the wing trusses each featured four BMFL Spots, three LEDBeam 100s and a single strobe per side.

On the front truss were 12 x LEDWash 600s, six Robe ROBIN 600E Spots and six 8-lite Moles used for blasting the audience.

The band's great rapport and lively interaction with their audiences is right at the core of their live performance, so numerous lighting looks reached out into the crowd connecting the band

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with their fans, throwing the energy off the stage right around the room.

On the eight vertical truss towers were a total of 8 x Pointes (on the tops), 8 x CycFX 8s which were ideal for beaming out and sweeping the audience, and eight strobes. The metalwork was again toned with LED PARs. Combined, the toners worked really well in highlighting the overall trussing structure.



A big, bold red backdrop of the upside-down heart completed the visual picture. There was no video and so all the emphasis was on Jeff's lighting to complement the power of the band.

Jeff first started using Robe products around a year ago when he introduced Pointes to the All Time Low design. He was very impressed with its vast array of creative possibilities. Following this excellent experience, he started looking at Robe a lot more ... and when the BMFL launched, it really attracted his attention.

Once he'd seen the demo - one of a series of US launch events organised by Robe America - his enthusiasm was further fuelled ... and this serendipitous set of circumstances was completed with Zig Zag winning the contract to be the Gaslight Anthem lighting vendor ... and making the purchase.

Robe's reporting team caught up with Jeff at the first UK gig, so he had only just got his hands on the fixtures, however, his first impressions left few doubts ... "Super bright and sharp and the colour mixing is fantastic," he declared.

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He made the most of the excellent gobo section and the animation wheels for eye candy in what was an extremely in-the-face show to match the band's cheeky and ebullient set which was loved by the crowds.

Jeff also made use of the BMFL's phenomenal zoom speed – incorporating 'zoom chases' spectacularly in the show.

No previous fixture has been able to zoom from minimum to maximum as quickly as the BMFL, so achieving the full potential effect of units snapping right out to the full wide angle and back in to the narrowest simply hasn't been possible until now.

He also comments that the BMFL Spot's beam is extremely sharp and clear even when irised right down and zoomed in.

The BMFLs were the main player of the show, with the Pointes also playing a major supporting role. The two sets of fixtures "Worked like a tag-team effectively," says Jeff.

The LEDBeam 100s meanwhile provided the show's foundation washes shadowing and underlining the Pointe focuses and adding contra movements.

The CycFX 8 was another relatively new Robe fixture in Jeff's creative palette. He used them for the first time on the initial US leg of the tour – supplied by East Coast Lighting & Production Services (ELCPS) – as a special effects fixture, ... and loved them! He particularly appreciates the ability to pixel map the units.

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“All these new Robe products have really broadened my design horizons and ideas,” he says. He also respects Robe as a trend setting lighting manufacturer that comes up time and again with genuinely innovative tools for LDs and operators.

The Gaslight Anthem set list changes daily, and while there are several ‘staples’ which are always played, the pool of variables extends to 56 songs, all of which are programmed into his Avolites Pearl console.

From a rental company perspective, Neil Hunt is delighted with the BMFL purchase. “It’s way brighter than any other fixture but not as heavy,” he notes, adding that the MF – multi-functionality – is a great asset that allows it to be run as a spot, a profile, a wash, a beam or an ‘ultra beam’ which is brighter than the brightest dedicated beam unit.

The speed at which the BMFL moves at is “Staggering” he confirms.

He first decided to invest in BMFLs after seeing one of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony rehearsals. “Not only did the fixtures have such clearly defined beams for an 80 metre throw in daylight – but it was almost impossible to distinguish between these and the 4K follow spots located in the same ‘back of upper seating’ positions.”

“I can now offer BMFL whenever any of the multitude of other ‘bright fixtures’ might be requested, and know I am giving the LDs something better, brighter and with considerably more headroom than anything else,” he concludes with a large smile.

Win-win all round!