

Green Impressions rock Danes



The 2009 edition of the infamous Roskilde festival

took place in the Danish town of the same name during the first week of July with an attendance of 65,000 people and bands such as Coldplay, Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds, Oasis, Pet Shop Boys and Faith No More all appearing over the course of the four day event.

Danish based Seelite supplied the lighting systems for multiple stages, including the main Orange stage which plays host to the biggest bands appearing. At the helm of lighting operations for Seelite is lighting designer Lars Nissen.



Lars had already been looking at LED based fixtures for various areas of his work and this tied in with a new initiative taken by the festival organizers, called Green Footsteps, calling for cutbacks in power usage on all stages – amongst many other initiatives. “I needed something that was bright and efficient but didn’t compromise on performance”, commented Lars. So, with his design this year, Lars brought in a large number of Impression LED moving head fixtures, manufactured by GLP in Germany, totaling 70 of the regular Impression fixtures and 24 of the Impression XL fixtures. With his design concept, Lars chose to place Impression units all the way

across the front of the stage, from the outer edge of one PA tower, all the way to the outer edge of the other. These were then supported by additional fixtures at the top of the PA towers and fixtures placed in the roof above each of the front of house mix positions, for audience lighting and to bring the stage out into the enormous crowds that flocked into the bigger name bands. The XL fixtures which are, in Lars' words, "Rationally damaging bright!" were part of the onstage lighting rig.



With this being a European festival and with the footlight concept that Lars had thought up, it was necessary to add some protection for the inevitable rain storms that would arrive. With help from GLP, protection domes and a new mounting bracket were constructed and shipped within just a few weeks and gave the fixtures all the protection they would ever need. With the position they had at the front of the stage, it was important for Lars to choose a fixture with as low a profile as possible and that would not be an eyesore to the audience, to the cameras or to the artists. "Not only did the Impression do this, but the protection domes too made sure they just looked cool and would keep on working." said Lars.

The opening line up on Thursday night featured a set by leading Danish DJ, Trentemoller. Wanting to pull him out into the audience, Lars designed a catwalk leading out to the performance area, and again featuring the Impression fixtures lining the sides. "As the catwalk was only in use on Thursday night and then removed for the rest of the festival, we wanted a fixture that was also going to be fast to de-rig and then re-rig in its new location. As the Impression has no base to it and weighs so little, it was able to fulfill all our requirements in this area too", added Lars.



Four days of operation in a dust covered festival environment is a good testing ground for any fixture. Mikkel Bach Nielsen was manning the front of house consoles for the third year running, “The units worked flawlessly during the whole festival, we never had to touch any of them.” confirmed Mikkel of their reliability level, then adding “I think the XL’s impressed all of the LD’s that came along. Most of them knew the Impression, but not the XL’s, and they are bright enough that even the daytime bands were using them.”

When the electrical meters were read at the end of the festival, power consumption on the Orange stage was just one fifth of what it has been in previous years, brought about by the amount of LED utilized in Lars’ design.