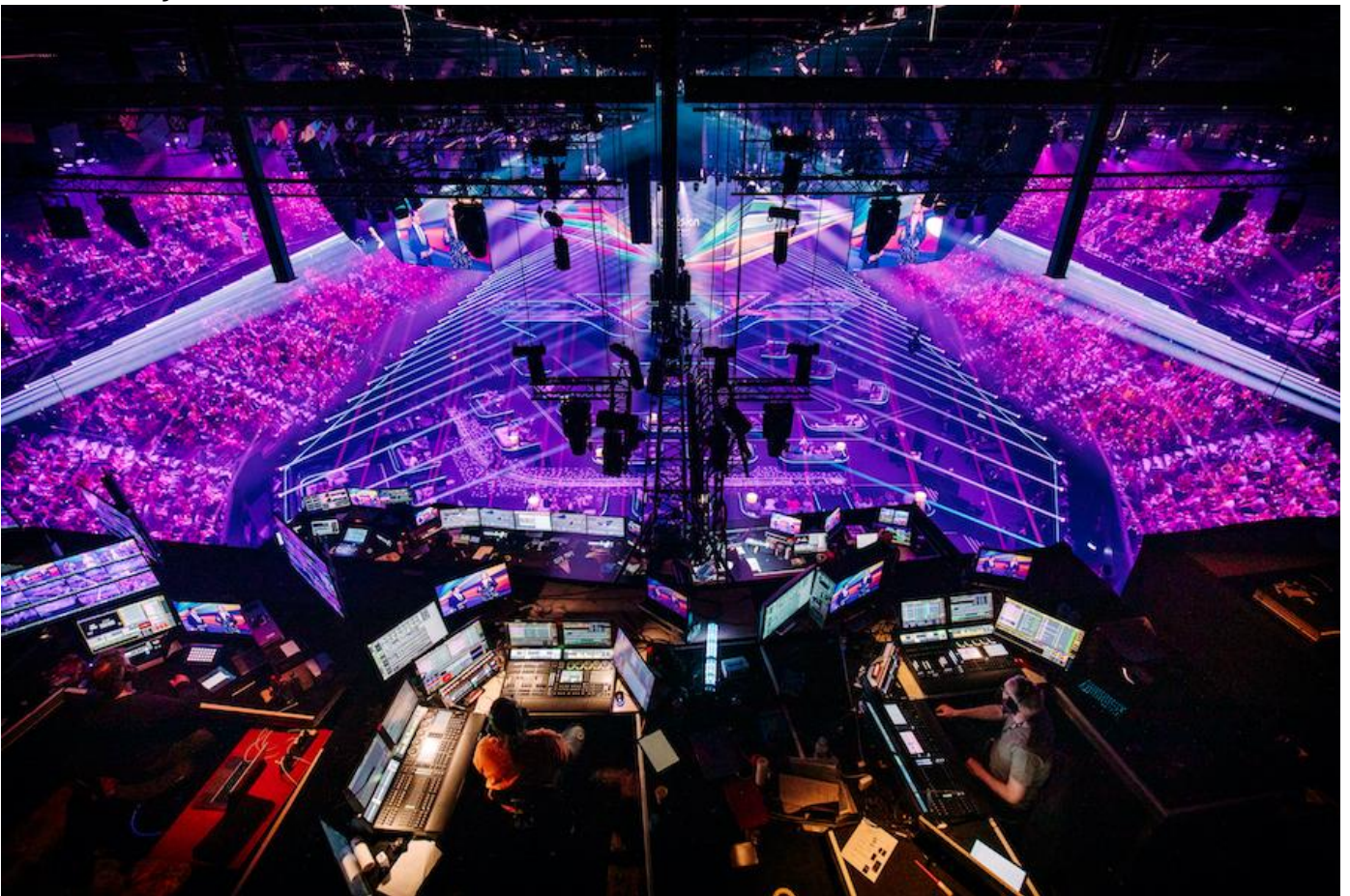


Hippotizer™ Media Servers Drive Eurovision LED Set Strips

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Almost 200 million people watched as a Hippotizer Boreal+ drove LED tape and strip colours on and around the main stage at Rotterdam's Ahoy Arena. A Hippotizer Karst+ controlled all of the LED strips in the artist booths. © Nathan Reinds

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The Netherlands - A newly formed group of Hippotizer Media Servers worked in total harmony for this year's spectacular Eurovision final, feeding lighting and visual data into LED strips and LED tape on the main stage, set pieces and in the 'green room' artist area.

An estimated 183 million people around the world watched as a Hippotizer Boreal+ served as lead in the band, driving all of the LED tape and strip colours on and around the main stage at Rotterdam's Ahoy Arena. Contestants from 39 countries took part in this year's event.



© Andre Beekmans

Second in command was a Hippotizer Karst+, which controlled all of the LED strips in the artist booths - where the all-important live interviews took place - as well as the specials for selected performers on the night.

No band is complete without support, so the set up was complemented by a Karst and Karst+ Media Server as backup for the live finals.

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© Andre Beekmans

Lighting designer for Eurovision 2021 was Henk-Jan van Beek from Light-H-Art. Managing the Hippotizer line up was André Beekmans from The Art of Light, who worked alongside show lighting programmers Micky Dordregter, Robbert-Jan Vernooij and Erik-Jan Berendesen to achieve the range of looks.

“Henk-Jan van Beek asked me to join in his team as one of the four show lighting programmers, and I was of course thrilled to be part of one of the world’s biggest events,” says Beekmans. “Right from the start, we knew we needed some seriously powerful kit to feed around 800 universes of LED pixels, so we began searching for the right solution – a powerful media server that could both handle the demands of the show, be user-friendly for all programmers working on the finals, and have a track record of reliability.

“I have always had a really good experience with Hippotizer servers, and have previously controlled LED strips using them. I also own some Hippotizer servers as part of my company, The Art of Light. But Micky and I still needed to decide which servers would be the right solution so we did some tests and the short version is that Hippotizer was the choice we made.”

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©Nathan Reinds

The Art of Light purchased the Boreal+ especially for Eurovision 2021. The other servers were supplied by Beekmans' company.

"The main element of the Eurovision set was a massive LED screen which could open with two giant doors that could rotate, and at the back side of the doors was a light grip with mini panels," Beekmans continues. "The stage was supported with ribs on the sides, filled with LED strips.

"When it came to the Hippotizers, PixelMapper was the main tool we used and we created some live masks to filter parts to control. For playback, we had a good library of content, comprised of a mix of standard content and custom-made content, which works well with the pixelmapping of LED strips. The features of Hippotizer made executing programming and control of the strips much easier, considering the enormity of the Eurovision requirements."

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The whole light setup was controlled using grandMA3 consoles running in MA2 mode, and all of the Hippotizer Media Servers were also controlled via this desk.

“This proved to be a very useful way to control everything from one place, so that the Hippotizers and the LED strips were in complete sync with all the lighting cues,” adds Beekmans.

Key light programmer was Joost Wijgers, with Bas Geersema serving as night shift programmer.

Eurovision 2021 was organised by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and host broadcaster Nederlandse Publieke Omroep (NPO), Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (NOS) and AVROTROS.