

Hippotizer Montane+ RTX Dances with the Stars in Finland



The Hippotizer Montane+ RTX servers enabled on-the-fly visual manipulation for the live shows

Finland – The 2020 series of Finland’s ‘Tanssii tähtien kanssa’ – a version of the BBC’s popular Strictly Come Dancing TV show – climaxed at the end of December following a visual feast driven by Hippotizer Montane+ RTX Media Servers.

A host of Finnish household names participated in Series 13 of the show, ranging from politicians to rappers, actors to YouTube stars. Their performances were backed by a mix of live feed and pre-made content, displayed on a huge LED screen backdrop and on smaller screens behind the judging panel. The live shows were seen by an average audience of more than one million, which is a sizeable chunk of Finland’s 5.5 million population.

At the visuals helm was Nordic events and experiences company Bright Group, headed up by designer and creative director Eero Helle, video operator Tero Kärpijoki and chief video tech Topi Rinne. The team specified two Montane+ RTX machines for the live shows, serving as one live and one backup.

“The choice of Hippo was easy, as Hippotizer is my go-to for big, live shows like this,” says Kärpijoki. “I’ve been working with Hippo servers for many years, and they always deliver for me. Hippo is a perfect tool for when lots of looks are required, and when changes need to be made to each one in such short timescales. Being able to add effects and manipulate the visuals in real-time, even during the show, is fantastic.”

Kärpijoki controlled the Montane+ RTX using a grandMA2, which he says is “so fast and reliable, and easy to

work with.” For signal distribution, they used a data splitter to drive the 4K feeds to LED processors, which enabled uniform colour data across the lighting and LED screens.

The original BBC visuals were supplied to the Finnish version to maintain branding across the formats, and newly created content by Visual45 was added to the mix, along with the live camera feeds.



“Hippotizer’s Output Mapping with Video Mapper was the heart of this set,” says Helle. “With mappers, getting all the pixels lined up for LED processors and pre-programming outputs was simple. Hippotizer’s Zookeeper UI is great and makes it really easy to modify the views for your own needs. There are so many user-friendly and powerful tools we used on this show, including Colour Blocks and the in-built Effects engine.”

Kärpijoki adds: “I have to thank Hippo for facilitating the manipulation of content in such a short timeframe. In Finland, we have to make shows in a very short time. For example, the rehearsals with cameras take place on the same day as the show, and it’s only on that day that we see the results through the cameras. So everything needs to be fast and rock solid. No time for errors!”

Credit: © Tero Kärpijoki