

Hippotizer-powered 'Winter Light' Experience Wows Wales

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UK - Shopping in one of Llandudno's central high streets became an immersive 'Winter Light' experience over the darker months as a parade of store fronts was transformed into a giant projection-mapped surface.

Eighty metres of shop façade, with a canvas size of 9600 x 1920 pixels, displayed content imagining mystery, magic and myth, created by mapping duo, Illuminos. The visuals were driven by three Green Hippo Hippotizer Karst+ Media Servers, configured as a main, backup and

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ZooKeeper machine for control and content ingest. Five Panasonic 30k projectors were on projection duty.

“This was a relatively complex canvas, requiring powerful playback and a combination of 3D model and photo reference for line-up,” explains Rob Vale, from Illuminos. “The exact projector locations could not be determined ahead of the event meaning that flexibility from the Media Servers during line-up was key. A 9600 x 1920 pixel canvas also meant that we needed punch in the playback, and we have found the Karst+ servers to be very smooth in frame rate.”



The experience, called Golau Gaeaf, was a narrative piece – a story about the chase for the ‘Conwy Mermaid’. The illuminated buildings came alive to act as ‘time travel portals’ – windows onto the centuries and a relentless chase of the mermaid. Stars and the Northern Lights glistened, and like a reanimated painting of colour and light, great waves of water billowed and swirled outwards, the tail of the mermaid splashing through them, as Vikings sail the oceans giving chase in their longboat.

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In another transformation, as the buildings became a Victorian funfair, carousels whirring and a Big Top appearing across the architecture. The shadow of the mermaid is seen across the canvas, as ringmaster gives chase accompanied by the animas of his circus, a frantic race across the Llandudno pier.

“We used SHAPE in particular, for flexibility in this case, and timeline/timecode options for sound playback,” Vale continues. “SHAPE allowed us to initially modify and adapt the C4D model both within the program and back and forth to C4D. The ability to change point positions is a benefit, and the model alignment then quickly places the

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projected content into position. Crucially, although the WARP properties in SHAPE were hugely important, as angles and positions relative to architecture needed to be adapted along the whole canvas. Having multiple, adaptable WARP areas and nuanced positioning really allowed us to be as accurate as possible on a challenging surface.”

The Hippotizers were supplied to the event by Cardiff-based Stage Sound Services, managed by Technical Support Manager, Richard Gilbert.



“All of the Karst+ machines were running the latest version of Hippotizer,” says Gilbert. “The latest Case Study feature was helpful in deciding where projectors should be positioned as we had a left and right position, so this helped with deciding which projector should go where, for both brightness, resolution and pixel distortion.”



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“In addition, the ability to edit the UV and the model from within SHAPE was very helpful as neither were quite right, so we could fix errors in it, preventing us from needing so much warp.”

Vale adds, “Adaptability and smooth playback really sets Hippotizer apart. In a live, on-site scenario, it is crucial to be able to make a range of subtle changes once in front of the buildings, without always having to adapt original models. We have used Hippotizer for several years, in part due to their proven reliability, on projects which might have only one showing that must run faultlessly, and trust in servers is key in this context.”

Winter Light / Golau Gaeaf was part of an art initiative commissioned by Conwy County Borough Council, Venue Cymru and Conwy Arts Trust. It marked the first year of a trilogy of events, celebrating the myths and legends of Conwy.

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Image Caption: Hippotizer Karst+ Servers fed visuals mapped to 80m of shop façade, with a canvas size of 9600 x 1920 pixels

Image © Stage Sound Services

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