Iconic AB Venue Rocks with Robe

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The Ancienne Belgique (AB), one of the best-known – and best-loved – venues on the international touring circuit, has invested in more Robe moving lights for its main hall house lighting rig with the addition of 26 x Arianne 6 LED wash beams, 16 x Arianne 2s and 36 x LEDBeam 200s, all launched this year by Robe, plus 8 x iPAINTE LTMs and 8 x LEDBeam 150s for the smaller club venue.

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Pictured: Sound of Brussels Orchestra. Photo by Lucinde Wahlen

The busy venue’s head of lighting, Jan Van Lindt, explained that technical upgrades happen every 8 years or so, and they strive to keep abreast of innovation in order to offer the highest possible production value to the diversity of artists using their famous performance space.

“We are extremely strong when it comes to client service,” he stated. “We want to be the number one choice for artists, management and production teams, while operating sustainably and providing a fantastic creative environment and atmosphere in which to work.”

This year, the lighting budget was specifically for new LED wash lights, and Jan started thinking about a combination of larger and smaller LED wash beams.

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Pictured: The Afghan Wigs. Photo Courtesy AB by Denis Moraux

As with previous ‘selection’ processes, they organised a ‘blind shootout’ to take place in their main auditorium with all the brands, comparing characteristics like brightness, dimming, colour mixing, spillage, etc., but without knowing which fixture was which. “It is the fairest way,” he noted, adding that they need to cover not just rock ‘n’ roll shows but also dance events and theatre productions.

From this, two brands stood out, and between these, Robe proved the best choice. Jan highlights how pleasantly “shocked” everyone was with the incredible performance of the little LEDBeam 200 both in output and quality! “They are so compact and versatile, and you can do so much with

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them,” he enthused.



Pictured**: **AB’s head of lighting, Jan Van Lindt**. **Photo by Louise Stickland

This was back in the summer. The Arianne 6, which had been launched at the MIR expo in Rimini, Italy, a few months earlier, was available, and seeing the fixture in action convinced them of the quality of the whole Arianne range, which also included the 2 variant, and – since September – an Arianne 4 and an Arianne 12.

The 26 x Arianne 6s are rigged above the stage and used as general show lights; of the 16 x Arianne 2s, 10 are on the front bar and six are used for side lighting; 16 of the LEDBeam 200s are

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positioned out above the auditorium in a 4×4 grid formation, with the other 20 available as extras, either as part of a floor package or they can be added to other sections of the house rig.



Pictured: Jan Van Lindt with Controllux's John Vanopstal. Photo by Louise Stickland

One of the first shows to use the new setup was a jazz concert for which the LEDBeam 200s were deployed on the deck all around the band.

Everyone using the venue so far is thrilled with the latest upgrades. Jan admits that he was slightly apprehensive about what LDs might think when they see how small the front and side

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lights were – i.e. the Arianne 2s in the main room – but that's only ever until they turn them on!

"LDs are also usually surprised at the punch of the Arianne 6s," says Jan, adding that they are an "excellent" choice, and that the IP65 rating reduces maintenance as the lenses are protected from all the dust, haze residue and other detritus floating around the airspace.



Photo by Louise Stickland

The smaller 250-capacity hall is now mostly lit with Robe products after this purchase with 8 x iPAINTE LTMs and 8 x LEDBeam 150s added. The 150s were chosen for their small size, brightness and zoom capabilities and they join their existing 10 x LEDBeam 150s and 11 x

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LEDBeam 350s in the rig, combining very well.

Jan thinks iPAINTE and LEDBeam 350 in particular are a great combination, and a perfect solution for AB’s small room.



Photo by Louise Stickland

Jan runs a lighting team of four full-time staff plus himself and a pool of regular freelancers, and he loves the unique vibes of the venue – where he previously worked for 10 years before taking a freelancing break.

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He thinks Robe is innovative and progressive as a brand, and in tune with industry needs, citing the Arianne series as a notable example. The environmental side is also important to the AB and its team, which is “well addressed” by Robe, and the fact that the lights are genuinely ‘Made in Europe’ also resonates.

This new batch of lights was delivered to the AB by Controllux Belgium.

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