

# **MMX and Bryan Adams**

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*Courtesy Louise Stickland*

The latest Bryan Adams tour is the first major one in the UK tour to feature Robe lighting's new ROBIN MMX Spots, as specified by lighting designer Ewan McRobb and supplied by the tour's lighting contractor, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, UK based Siyan.

The MMX Spot is the first of Robe's next generation of 1200 series moving lights - and like its predecessors, is expected to become a workhorse lighting unit for multiple applications. The MMX

Spot is considerably smaller, brighter and lighter and seriously more power friendly, designed and built with the principals of greener technology to the fore.

McRobb - who has worked for superstar rocker Adams for the last five years - has used some Robe fixtures on rigs in the past, but has not actually integrated any into his designs until now. He was shown the MMXs when initially discussing the tour with Siyan's Nick Valdez, who had just taken delivery of some of Robe's newest technology. McRobb liked what he saw and decided to spec twelve MMXs onto the tour.

McRobb needed really intense fixtures on the rig that were seriously bright enough to be able to hold their own against a large 24 metre wide by 9 high upstage Stealth screen, which creates the main look and defines the visual spatiality of the stage.



This was Adams' idea, and video – mainly the raw, highly effective IMAG mix of video director Mathieu Coutu plus some playback – and a sparse looking stage underpins the show's aesthetics. The power of the music takes centre-stage bordered by

a monochrome, edgy industrial look. Sections of the video footage and camera action are treated and effected with elements like colour, movement, grading and noise, all to great impact.

McRobb's lighting compliments this very strong filmic aesthetic.

As a photographer of some repute, Adams takes a keen interest in lighting and therefore also his stage lighting. "He has multiple ideas and knows exactly what he wants," explains McRobb, adding that Adams also fully appreciates the dramatic potential of lighting.

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The MMXs are spread out over the rig's four trusses and are used for general stage lighting, for key lighting the band and for some more specific high-brightness effects. Also on the rig is a selection of other moving lights and generics, but overall it's not a large lighting set up for an arena show, and McRobb makes all fixtures – including the MMXs – work hard.



He is really impressed with the performance of the MMXs, remarking "It's the first time I have properly used Robe in a design, and the brightness of the MMX is remarkable. They have no trouble at all in cutting through and

contending with all the light coming off the screen,” he comments, adding that he also likes the compact physical size of the units. This is also appreciated by his crew – Iestyn Thomas, Matt West, Karl Lawton and Chris Randall.

He also remarks on the reliability of the MMX – a well-documented characteristic of Robe products to the delight of hire companies and touring techs alike!



He realises that he's only scratched the

surface in terms of utilising the features and functionality of the MMX so far – due to the nature of the show and the creative requirements of the lighting which is clean, direct and nothing complicated with gobos or mixed colours. “I’m definitely interested in using them again, and exploring and expanding my MMX horizons,” he concludes.

Bryan Adams is constantly touring and playing live on average about two weeks a month, a testament to his enduring popularity worldwide and is currently alternating between acoustic ‘Bare Bones’ concerts and a full band show which acknowledges 20 years since the seminal “Waking Up The Neighbors” album. The set includes several anthems from that work.

This same stage and lighting design with the MMXs is scheduled to continue with the full band show into Europe and Japan in early 2012 .

