

OH BOY It's Robe for Hecht

Posted on December 6, 2019



Swiss pop-rock band Hecht – well-known for their energized live shows, slick dance moves, foot-tapping tunes, general zaniness and eye-catching post-concert videos – thrilled 13,000 fans at Zurich's Hallenstadion in an energy-fuelled visual and sonic extravaganza which included zip-lining keyboardists, crowd surfing, inflatable pink flamingos and several tons of confetti!

They are a band who know how to entertain!

Show and lighting designer Roger Staub was asked to create a BIG, vibrant and memorable show to end their current touring cycle riding high on their chart-topping third studio album *Oh Boy* ... and assisting him to make a massive impact were 98 x Robe MegaPointes and 60 x Pointes!

Roger, who is based in LA and Zurich, first met the band three years ago at the Swiss Music Awards. They asked him to produce this ground-breaking show for which he worked very closely with the artists themselves to ensure plenty of visual drama and craziness were combined with 3 hours of musical fun!



Roger is also a video content creator and his elegant design combined the media of lighting and video perfectly, proportionately putting the band right at the centre of the action on a large (18 x 8 metre) semi-transparent LED screen.

Visually, Roger wanted to create simple and powerful statements and a clean performance space. To keep focus on the band, he proposed the central upstage screen instead of standard left and right IMAGs as one of his starting points.

The concert was also shot for a DVD / documentary film with 15 cameras in total, 11 of which were available for a lively IMAG mix which was cut by John Allen of Live Image.

The screen position ensured that all eyes stayed centre stage, glued to the imaginative collage of multi-angled IMAG images. A vital part of the aesthetic was that the lighting looks worked harmoniously to create a sumptuous 'bigger picture' combined with the camera mix.

The presence of the screen also required really bright lightsources to punch through, so Roger immediately thought of Pointes and MegaPointes as ideal tools.



For practical as well as stylistic reasons in designing a large one-off, he wanted to refine the number of fixture types on the rig, which was pared down to four, carefully picked for maximum versatility ... to keep the looks varied and fresh from start to finish of a truly incendiary performance.

In addition to the Pointes and MegaPointes ... there was a matrix of 84 LED battens around and behind the LED screen, and a scattering of strobes.

He relied on the full multi-functionality of the MegaPointes in particular to provide his beam, spot and wash effects. Roger had used MegaPointes before, but primarily in festival scenarios, so this was the first show with them as the main fixture.

Seventy-two MegaPointes were used around and below the screen, rigged on a series of trusses hung below one another, with 20 x Pointes behind the LED screen, blasting through.

Ten MegaPointes circled the edges of the B-Stage at the end of an 18-metre runway from the stage that got the band right in among their fans, with another six for side lights shooting across the downstage edge of the main stage. The remaining 10 were on the front truss for front light, keys and specials.

Forty Pointes were positioned around the arena on a perimeter truss for lighting the audience along with some LED spheres and LED battens.

The strobes were on the deck behind the backline, and the stage, runway and B-stage were all outlined in LED. The B stage also had a low-resolution video floor.

The concept of reducing the fixture types also speeded up programming ... whilst they did have some pre-vis time, the on-site lighting programming window of four hours was the only chance to see how things really looked and worked in situ, and in that time, the building blocks had to be fine-tuned and plenty still needed creating!

"I wanted to concentrate on the overall looks and in making big, bold lighting statements," explained Roger who knew that the band would be animated and buzzing with energy, moving constantly between stages. This was why he needed front / key lights that also looked great as rear lighting when they were on the B-stage, and that could create curtains of effects.

"MegaPointes were absolutely THE right fixtures for getting all that energy offstage and out there and around the room. They easily had the intensity to reach all the way down to the back of the arena and beyond."



MegaPointes proved themselves in every way to be the 'universal' lighting fixture to ensure this show looked fantastic live and on camera.

"I wanted to embrace all the fans with the lighting and pull them into the performance, and this was precisely the effect we achieved with all those beams," he enthused.

The MegaPointe's hot spot control and beam-shaper were gifts in assisting the stark and contrasty IMAG shots they wanted, but so the cameras didn't look washed out.

Roger also loves the prism effects, plus the general brightness. Even with a prism and in darker colours, they were still able to produce “amazing backdrops” behind the band.

Once the setlist was finalised in the run up to the gig, he thought about colours for each song. The music goes from classic pop to soft rock to banging EDM, so the goal was to get away from traditional blue and red books and go for some more off-beat and adventurous elements of the colour spectrum.

Lots of yellows, pinks, purples and magentas used judiciously and thoughtfully made a refreshing change.

When he did choose a red, the colour palettes were defined to give neon shades – circa 1980's Miami vibes – rather than legacy shades.

Roger used plenty of white, which is a personal favourite, mixing the subtleties of different texturing, tonality and colour temperatures – striking, dramatic and cool – especially with the IMAG effects using a lot of monochrome.

During “Radio Beromünster”, the Pointe beams from behind the screen appeared to trigger the video content as they intersected with the LED mesh – 20 positions of abstract video waves played out to match the 20 Pointes blasting through.



Lighting also complimented the IMAG video by framing, enhancing or colouring the screen images creating a beautifully balanced resonance.

A grandMA3 network was used for control with the main lighting console programmed and operated by lighting director Mathias Peter, and additional programming from Christian Crego.

All the lighting kit was supplied to the production by Habegger AG – project managed for them by Thomas Herdener – with some elements sourced from Niclen. Audio was supplied by Schallwerk Audiotechnik GmbH, a Coda system which sounded fantastic in the hands of FOH engineer Stefan Zumstein.

The elegant, low-profile, lightweight Coda line arrays were also appreciated by Roger in the stage design, and there was minimal blocking of lights and sightlines.

The inflatable pink flamingos came from Amazon – where else? – and were customised to fit the two slow-moving scissor lift platforms that crawled their way purposefully down either side of the arena – each with band-members onboard!

The show was a massive success, and as everyone clamours to get a copy of the after-movie and eagerly await more live shows, the band are heading back to the studio to start work on their next album.