

Robe for Volbriöö Event in Estonia

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The final evening concert of the 2022 Volbriöö event in Estonia's vibrant and picturesque second city of Tartu took place on the Kaarsild (Arch) Bridge, an elegant pedestrian link that connects the centre of town with the Ülejõe District, traversing the Emajõgi River.

Andres Sarv, lighting designer from Tartu's famous Vanemuine theatre and a team from production and rental company E&T were asked to assist with the technical elements including lighting which had a key role in the presentation. Andres specified Robe Pointe, LEDWash 800, Spikie and LEDBeam 100 moving lights.

These were used to light all the stage action, structural aspects of the bridge, plus the river, riverbank and surrounding areas as thousands congregated to enjoy the music and live artist performances, including headliners popular rapper GENKA and famous Estonian singer / songwriter Orelipoiss.

Tartu's Volbriöö is a night of celebration for students and their related organisations – it is a big university town – and this regional Estonian version of the event is loosely based on the centuries-old Christian Saint Walpurgis Night feast day. It is the final event of the “Tartu Student Days” festival comprising hundreds of smaller performances and parties.

The 2022 theme was dedicated to supporting and being aware of the challenges faced by war-torn neighbours in Ukraine as the country fights fearlessly and tirelessly for peace, freedom, and sovereignty not just for itself, but for the whole of Europe.



Andres and the E&T crew have been involved in supplying the event's lighting for several years before the pandemic, which stopped it for two years, so they knew the setting and were also determined to ensure that everything looked extra special for this return to a live and in-person

event.

The Robe fixtures were positioned on the long-and-slim stage – some on the floor and some on the surrounding metalwork and also under the stage. In addition to illuminating the stage area, the bridge and the artists, the Pointes, in particular, were great for shooting powerful pillars up into the night sky and along the river.

Pointes provided plenty of eye-candy and potent beams to draw spectators down to the riverbanks to enjoy the show, which they could watch for free.

The little LEDBeam 100s and Spikies were dotted around the stage, their small size and powerful beams making them a perfect choice both to fit on the tight space and to look great behind the artists or for illuminating larger areas and up-lighting and colouring the bridge's structural pillars.



The LEDWash 800s were on the stage to provide general wash where needed on the stage or across the bridge.

“These four fixture types were perfect for the job, and all complemented each other nicely,” confirmed Andres. “They are compact and lightweight, yet bright, powerful and able to offer plenty of creative options.”

The lighting fixtures were pulled from E&T’s rental stock and Showtech supplied and built the stage at the centre point of the bridge, designed to match the style and appearance of the architecture as closely as possible.

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Everyone involved in organising and staging this event was delighted to be back working on a real live and in-person show again (after two years of pandemic and lock downs) ... at that stage it still felt new and a bit of a novelty to have audiences and their energy back once again!



Andres programmed the lights on a ChamSys MQ80 console working closely with Tõnis Sarv, E&T's project manager for the event, who also operated the lights.

Tartu's Arch bridge was built between 1957 and 1959 on the site of a former stone bridge that was destroyed during the second World War. It was renovated in 2017 and is tastefully architecturally lit at night. The River Emajõgi that it crosses connects Estonia's two largest lakes, Lake Võrtsjärv and Lake Peipus.

Photos: By Ragnar Vutt