

Robert Juliat Dalis performs for Richard Sandaime



Robert Juliat's award-winning Dalis 860 cyclorama washlights were chosen by lighting designer Scott Zielinski, to light the backdrops for the inspired theatre production of *Richard Sandaime*, a co-production between the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre and the Singapore International Festival of Arts, which premiered at the Shizuoka Arts Theatre in Japan as part of its World Theatre Festival 2016. **Photographer : Jun Ishikawa**

Directed by one of Asia's leading theatre directors, Ong Keng Sen, *Richard Sandaime* is an international collaboration performed in Japanese, English and Indonesian with Japanese and English subtitles. It uses top actors from Singapore, Indonesia and Japan, and a wonderful Balinese puppeteer. Loosely based on Shakespeare's *Richard III*, this innovative and rarely performed production – the first since Japanese playwright and director Noda Hideki's original 1990 production – is the story of a fictional trial of Shakespeare, who allegedly defamed Richard Sandaime, the Grand Master of Ikebana.

The main scenic element for *Richard Sandaime* is the cyclorama itself, which Zielinski had intended to light with standard 1250W 4-colour cyclorama lights, mixing them in traditional style. "However, it came as quite a shock to me that Japan typically uses only 300W or 500W cyc lights which were not powerful enough for such an important feature," he says. "It quickly became obvious I needed to look at other options."



The highly visual production called for a fixture with an extremely, wide colour spectrum, which could produce intense colour. Zielinski was very keen to get the best product to deliver the effect he needed for the cyclorama and was introduced to the Robert Juliat Dalis 860 by Sogo Butai Co Ltd, an associate company of Robert Juliat's Japanese distributor, Theater Engineering Co Ltd.

Dalis 860 has a double row of 24 LEDs (48 in total) and an eight colour mixing system, from which multiple, intense and vivid colours, or delicate, pale washes can be produced. Dalis is also convection cooled so there are

no noisy fans to contend with, which makes it ideal for use in theatre and television.

When Zielinski tried the Dalis fixtures he commented, "I was blown away – I used 12 units to cover the 9m high x 12m wide cyclorama from a floor-mounted position only 2m behind the cloth. They produced an absolutely smooth, beautiful, even wash of incredible intensity."

The effects achieved for this production were absolutely perfect, with the strong colours evoking the very stylistic design and use of colour, seen in many paintings and Japanese art. The smoothness and depth of colour was achieved with each LED working in conjunction with Dalis's unique optical system. The system incorporates the use of a mini asymmetric reflector or 'spoon' with each LED which helps create the wide beam spread and the huge variety of pastel and saturated colours.

"No other manufacturer has created something with such a native wide beam spread," continued Zielinski. "This is key to the unit – it is just what you need when you are trying to light a cyc and why I chose Dalis."

"The optical system works much more efficiently than the interchangeable lenses used by other LED cyclorama fixtures, and results in a much wider, smoother coverage. And because Dalis' LED technology does not filter out any light, I didn't lose intensity, even with the deep colours."

Many of the scenes in the production are very bright with the courtroom scenes, for example, depicted with a deep purple backdrop and full stage lighting in the foreground. "With Dalis, we were able to achieve a perfect, vibrant, deep purple sheet of cyclorama behind a full stage of light – it was super-punchy!" says Zielinski. "You could never get that intensity of colour and light with filters and conventional lighting. I've never seen anything like it."

Zielinski was also able to make use of the individual control over sections of the Dalis units: "This feature enabled me to create some amazing, unique moving effects, such as a rainbow effect scrolling from left to right across the cyclorama in one of the more comic moments. I wouldn't be able to do that with anything else."

Zielinski summed up his experience with Dalis, "For me the most fantastic thing was the ability to have those pure, vibrant sheets of colour – this is the only equipment that allows me to do this. I am already planning on using them in some future projects."

Following its Japanese premiere, *Richard Sandaime* moved to the Victoria Theatre & Concert Hall, Singapore in September where it played for two weeks as part of the annual Singapore International Festival of Arts. The production then moved to Tokyo, from where it embarks on a small tour of four more Japanese cities in November.

A co-production between Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre and Singapore International Festival of Arts, Hideki Noda's *Richard Sandaime* was directed by Ong Keng Sen. The lighting was designed by Scott Zielinski, with set design by Kato Chika, costume by Yanaihara Mitsushi, video design by Takahashi Keisuke and music by Yamanaka Toru.