

Robert Juliat still shines in The House of Dancing Water



by Chris Luk

Six Robert Juliat 600W LED Oz followspots have been installed as part of the recent upgrade of the spectacular Franco Dragone show, *The House of Dancing Water* in Macau's City of Dreams. The powerful, long-throw LED models were supplied with push-pull, 6-way colour changers and heavy-duty adjustable yokes in anticipation of the show's extremely busy schedule.

The House of Dancing Water is a USD250m, enthralling visual feast which has been seen by over 5 million people since its premiere in 2010. It is the largest and most spectacular water-based show in the world and, after more than 3000 performances, the longest running show on the Cotai Strip. The show takes place in the purpose-built, 2000-seat, 270° in-the-round, House of Dancing Water Theatre and is directed by the world-renowned and highly creative Franco Dragone. The story is focused around a huge 50m x 7m deep pool containing 3.7million gallons of water and involves 90 performers and over 200 international technicians who work their magic to create a scintillating show that dances with colour and light.

The House of Dancing Water show's lighting designer, award-winning Luc Lafortune, originally specified Robert Juliat Victor followspots and 14 RJ D'Artagnan profiles, all of which have worked hard for 8 years, playing ten shows a week in a highly unusual, moisture-filled environment, and been maintained by the lighting team led by Head of Lighting, Projections and Special Effects, Karl Jenkins.

For the show's upgrade, Jenkins had no doubt that the replacement followspots should also be from Robert Juliat. "Robert Juliat provides some of the most optically accurate luminaires in the world, and for this reason and their amazing longevity, they were chosen for the original build," he explains. "There was no question that the replacement for the Victor followspots, after 8 years of excellent service, would be anything other than another RJ fixture. With the large push towards sustainable shows and LED technology across the board, the RJ Oz is the best fixture on the market by far for our needs and, with its release aligning precisely with a major upgrade of the show, it was a perfect candidate for the replacement."

Retaining the initial design intention of the show was important to the lighting team when considering the replacement, so a demo unit was provided by Pacific Lighting (HK) Ltd to allow them to make an accurate assessment: “The performance of the Oz when seen side by side the Victor exceeded our expectations and the light output was more than suitable for our needs,” confirmed Jenkins.

Jenkins has extensive experience with Robert Juliat lanterns and followspots, having worked as Head of Lighting on many productions for Cirque du Soleil – where RJ equipment has played an enormous role – before heading up *The House of Dancing Water*. “Brightness, beam quality, robust engineering, reliability, ergonomics, power consumption...all of these were considerations that we took into account when making the decision,” he says, “but, for me, it was the power from the LED that ultimately won me over. After 10 years of experience with RJ products, the other features are a ‘given!’”

Like their predecessors, the six RJ 600W LED Oz followspots are rigged evenly around 270° of the circular grid above the audience, and used to highlight the show’s main protagonists. “The production has an incredibly heavy and meticulous followspot design as is the case with many of Luc’s designs,” states Jenkins. “For this reason, an elegant yet powerful LED fixture was required to achieve everything from the beautiful low–light character highlights to high–energy powerful punches of light.

“In addition to this, from the operators’ point of view, Oz’s lack of ballast and the general heat reduction is also a great asset, and the electronic dimming in the LED fixtures is based on the same physicality of the existing dimming system, so makes for an incredibly simple transition for operators.

“We are extremely happy with the new LED replacements and I would specify Robert Juliat again, especially the new LED range, without a doubt.”

The RJ Oz 600W LED followspots – and all the show’s RJ equipment – were supplied by White Light Ltd via Robert Juliat’s local distributor, Pacific Lighting (HK) Ltd, which has sold over 160 Robert Juliat followspots to the region since becoming part of the RJ family.



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