ROBE lighting s .r. o., Hazovice 2090
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Robe United with Germany

Products Involved

BMFL™ WashBeam **Pointe®** **RoboSpot™** **Spiider®**

German Unity Day (Tag der Deutschen Einheit) is an annual celebration held on October 3rd, marking the anniversary of the nation's unification in 1990, when the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic became one single, federal Germany.

Being the 30th Unity Day, the 2020 event took on special significance, with even more resonance added to the mix due to the challenges faced by everyone in dealing with life during the Coronavirus pandemic, and broadcaster ARD highlighted a very special TV show staged at the Metropolis-Halle in Filmpark Babelsberg, Potsdam which was organised by the Brandenburg Staatskanzlei (federal government).

The venue and Filmpark (dedicated to the history of moviemaking in the region) is a regular client of rental and production specialist Zound’z Unlimited Event Technology GmbH, also based in Potsdam, which was asked to provide lighting, audio and regular IMAG video for the telecast / live stream.

A production lighting design was created by Zound’z Unlimited’s Marcus Meissner – who is head of lighting and rigging at the company – and included over 200 Robe moving lights, a combination of Pointes, Spiiders, BMFL WashBeams, LEDWash 800s and a RoboSpot system.

Onstage, a diverse line-up of artists helped celebrate the dynamics of German music genres, from schlager superstar Roland Kaiser to the foot-tapping electropop of M.I.A., singer and actress Anna Loos to singer-songwriter Mark Forster and the Babelsberger Filmorchester, who backed each artist with special arrangements for this show.

The show was also broadcast on the ARD public service TV channel, streamed across several social networks … and attended live by a small invite-only audience of 250 socially distanced politicians and dignitaries.

Marcus’s starting point for the lighting design was the occasion itself and the fact that the show is essentially more of a commemoration in style rather than being a big production entertainment spectacle, so the task was to light the show for TV and cameras and ensure that all the artists looked good.

His biggest challenge was to ensure that light was kept off a large upstage projection screen and multiple gauze banners which were rigged all over the stage and used by Berlin-based video artist Philipp Geist, who was commissioned to produce special show content which included archival footage and historical movies.

Meeting these two criteria involved a lot of attention to detail, and Marcus wanted multifunctional fixtures as the backbone of the lighting rig.

The 44 x BMFL WashBeams were used for front and key lighting all over the stage, and in fact were a request from RBB (Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg), which undertook technical implementation of the event’s broadcast on site for ARD. Two BMFL WashBeams on an ‘advanced’ truss around 7.5 metres from the front truss, rigged above the audience area for a flatter angle, were running on a Robe RoboSpot remote control system.

The 102 Spiiders were positioned over the stage and on trusses above the audience area in the hall and were used for front light onstage and general washes. Some were positioned upstage where they could create video-style effects utilising the pixel and ring control features. Marcus comments that they looked great and produce a good, solid camera-friendly white.

The 27 x Pointes were used for effects lighting and adding some energy and razzamatazz at the back.

Up until one week before the event they didn’t know if haze would be permitted due to Covid-19 regulations, so it was decided to increase the Spiider count at the back of stage to enable Marcus to create alternative effects with these, and an additional 32 x LEDWash 800s were then brought in to deal with back-lighting the socially distanced audience.

All lighting was controlled through a grandMA system – a grandMA2 full size with a Light for backup, dealing with 21 x DMX universes and around 8000 parameters. All the effects lighting for the broadcast show was operated by Fabian Lahme.

The white light operator and the follow spot operator running the RoboSpot system – who was positioned backstage, adjacent to ‘dimmer city’ – were both supplied by RBB and worked

closely with the Zound’z team.

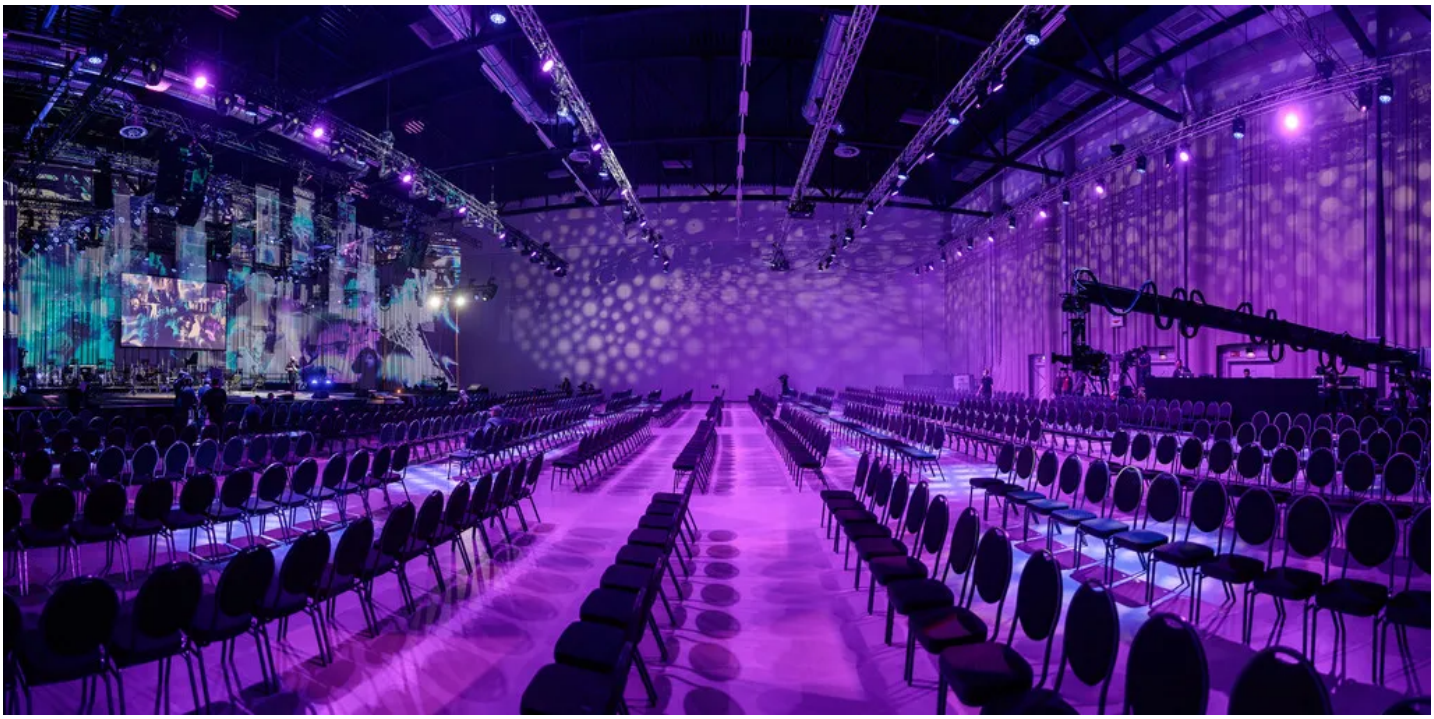
Zound’z Unlimited has been investing in Robe products for the last 15 years, right from the early days and now has a good inventory to cover their regular events, conferences, parties and shows. Additional kit for the larger event like this can be easily cross rented, and in this case, the extra Robes came from dry hire specialist Niclen.

The results were spectacular and enjoyed by massive audiences on TV and online.

Marcus and the crew collaborated closely with Moritz Meyer, Filmpark Babelsberg’s head of technical and his team, and all were very proud to be involved in this memorable event, as well as delighted to be working on a show in a period that’s extremely tough on all live event businesses.

“After so long with no shows, this was a BIG occasion for us with all the live and TV aspects and something we’ve all been dreaming about for some time,” concluded Marcus.

Photo Credit: Zound’z Unlimited



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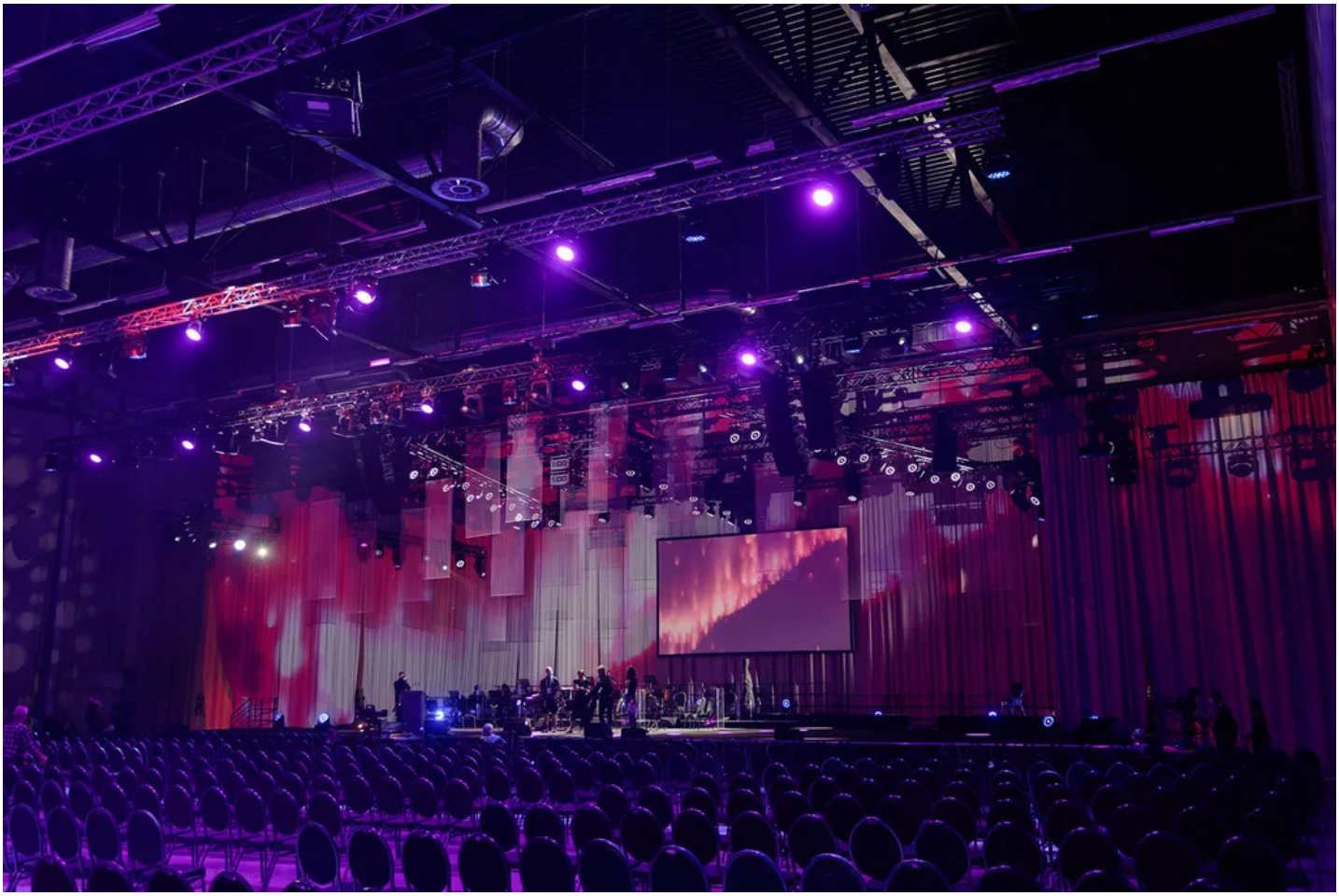

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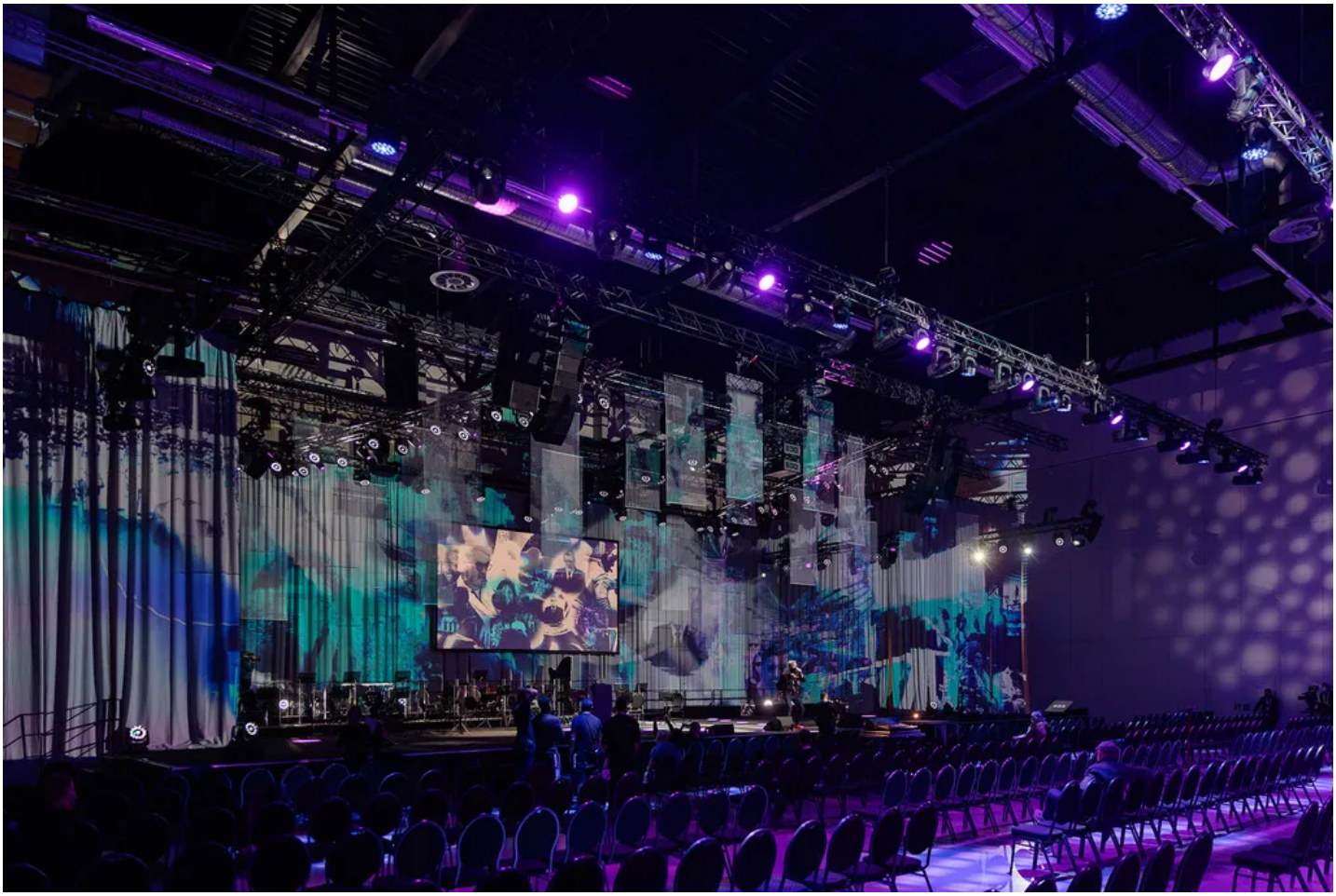
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