



Delivering a symphony of light at the Royal Albert Hall.

Panasonic projectors have been used to tell a remarkable visual and musical story commemorating the centenary of the First World War at both the opening night of the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh International Festival.

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Challenge

To create a musical and visual story commemorating the end of the First World War across two very different buildings.

Solution

To create a stunning projected showpiece using 20 Panasonic RZ31Ks laser projectors renowned for their reliable brightness and compact ability.

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James Roxburgh-
Production Manager for 59
Productions.



Image: Justin Sutcliffe



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2018 marks 100 years since the end of the First World War, with many public art commissions commemorating this historic occasion. Five Telegrams, a brand new work by composer Anna Meredith and 59 Productions, was commissioned by 14-18 NOW, BBC Proms and the Edinburgh International Festival. The piece was written in five movements which each focussed on an aspect of communication during the First World War.

"The projection was a series of musical movements dramatically framed around communications in WW1. It was important that it wasn't sepia toned or dated, it needed to look contemporary visually and sound contemporary musically. The projection mapping was incredible as the medium for that," comments James Roxburgh, 59 Productions Production Manager who was responsible for the delivery of the events in London and Edinburgh.

Anna Meredith and 59 Productions were approached by the BBC Proms, Edinburgh International Festival (EIF) and 14-18 NOW as part of the WW1 Centenary Art Commissions, a five-year programme of extraordinary arts experiences connecting people across the UK with the First World War.

The musical art projection was timetabled to be the 2018 opening events for both the Edinburgh International Festival and the BBC Proms, a first-time collaboration for these two world-leading arts institutions.

"We used the RZ31K as the flagship projector for this performance. There were 20 at the Albert Hall and 10 for the Usher Hall. The quantities differ according to the target surface areas and the amount of light pollution in London compared to Edinburgh as well as the time of day," explains James.

The projection display was split up into five parts entitled: spin, field postcards, redaction, codes and armistice which signified different aspects of communication during the war. The accompanying music and visual images told a story that captured the audience's attention.

The two performances were intricately planned and designed but were not without their challenges. "The eternal enemy is the sun," remarks James. "We spend a week prior to the event setting up and we just spend days waiting for the sun to set so we can see the projector output."

"The Albert Hall at around 5000 sq metres and the Usher Hall at around 3000 sq metres are quite different scales but are both huge projection surfaces."

"We are planning to use these projectors on other projects that we have in the pipeline, they are a favourite."



"The Panasonic RZ31K is the brightest model that's available on the rental market at the moment. We're always going to go for the fewest number of units to do the job so brightness was the number one selling point," said James.

The RZ31K has a powerful 31,000 lumens and dual drive laser optical engine for reliable operation. "Lamp free operation was an important factor for us as in one-off events, the pressure is on for everything to work. Lamps can decrease in brightness depending on the lifespan unlike laser projectors so taking lamps out of the risk analysis is really good from my perspective," said James.

"The projector is a relatively compact unit given the performance and that was really important particularly for the Usher Hall in Edinburgh because the rooms were really small. We were actually in the rooms in the Sheraton hotel opposite, so we were squeezing a lot of projection fire-power into a conventional hotel room."

"It also only takes four crew to move the projectors whereas you'd need lifting equipment to move some of the projectors on the market at the same brightness."

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A number of different challenges were presented in replicating the project across the two very different venues. "Edinburgh's Usher Hall and the Royal Albert Hall are very different surface wise. The Usher Hall has a glass extension which would have been a problem had the team at EIF not covered it with temporary graphic vinyl for us, which was a blessing."

"The Albert Hall is much more complicated in terms of colour, it's got red and cream contrasting colours on the surfaces, which mean that we have to do some complicated things in terms of colour correction with a media server to make the buildings look alike. They are very different subjects for a similar piece of content that had to be matched across both," finishes James.

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