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Harpa Invests in Robe FORTES

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Harpa – Iceland's premier concert hall and conference centre, located in capital city Reykjavik – has invested in 48 x new Robe FORTE moving lights which will be utilised in their 1600-capacity Grand Hall, home of the Icelandic Opera and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

The striking Harpa building was designed by the Hanning Larsen Architects from Denmark in conjunction with Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson – well known for creating sculptured and large-scale installation art using elements like light, water, and air temperature – and opened in 2011. The structure comprises a steel framework clad with different coloured and shaped geometric glass panels inspired by Iceland's beautiful and mineral-rich basaltic rock landscape.

Harpa is the highest profile concert and conference venue in the country and stages numerous high visibility world-class productions and events as well as hosting meetings and high-rolling summits. Karl Sigurðsson, managing director of Robe's Iceland distributor, Luxor, was delighted to win the tender and supply the project with FORTES.

The luminaires are part of a technical upgrade that has replaced the original moving lights – from another brand – that were installed in 2011 when the project opened. Karl worked closely with the venue's technical manager Andri Guðmundsson to ensure everything happened smoothly and seamlessly.

The replacement fixtures had to be state-of-the-art to match the stature of Harpa and the expectations of its staff, clients, visitors, and audience, and sustainable and good for the environment. Andri researched extensively, narrowed down the options and issued the tender.

FORTE was selected for several reasons, explained Karl.

First off was the quietness – essential in a concert hall environment like this and anywhere where a symphony orchestra is playing, or an opera is performed. Artists, musicians, and conductors working

in this world are renowned for their auricular sensitivity.

The light output – both the brightness and the overall quality plus elements like high CRI – were other essential considerations as was the TE (TRANSFERRABLE ENGINE), a groundbreaking light engine technology developed by Robe to elongate the lifespan of LED fixture, which also cycles back to sustainability – and increased flexibility. The engine can be replaced or changed to a different one with alternative characteristics.

Accurate shuttering was another feature, and the FORTES were also competitively priced.

The shortlist of fixtures was narrowed down to two that fulfilled the spec and FORTE was chosen as the winner for being “light in weight, silent, sustainable and delivering fantastic output,” explained Karl, underlining that the TE technology was a big plus for Andri and the team.

He added that people are people now definitely “getting” what TE brings to the moving light equation, especially for installed applications.

Apart from that “They just wanted something that was generally excellent, and respected industry-wide” stated Karl.

The Harpa team had previously had good experiences with their 40 x Robe Spiider LED wash beam luminaires, purchased in 2018, which have replaced all the previous generation of wash fixtures. “That wasn’t essential in getting the FORTES onboard, but it really helped that the Spiiders have been such a success” noted Karl.

The main house lighting control is grandMA.

Andri Guðmundsson stated, “We are extremely happy with the purchase and in the short period we have been using the FORTES, they have met all our expectations, and are the next logical step in our journey to a more sustainable future as we have been investing heavily in LED fixtures. We look forward to using them for many years to come.”

The first event at Harpa benefitting from the new FORTES took place on November 17th, featuring electro artists and local heroes GusGus, with the fixtures inaugurated by their lighting designer, Agnar Hermansson.

Luxor offers expertise and creativity in all technical disciplines and distributes many top-level brands including Robe. It has a rental, a sales and a projects division, and has been a Robe distributor since

2003, very shortly after Robe launched as its own brand following experience as a quality OEM manufacturer. In this time, Luxor has built a solid reputation for Robe nationwide.

Photo Credit: Mummi Lu, courtesy Harpa





