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Robe CitySource 96s for Helsinki Light Season

Over 100 of the new Robe CitySource 96 LED wash fixtures were utilised to illuminate two high profile light works - at Parliament House and the Council of State and University buildings in Senate Square adjacent to the Cathedral - featured in the Finnish capital, Helsinki's 2009 Light Season.

The exterior light art for both sites was designed by leading Finnish lighting designer Mikki Kunttu. It was the second year of the event, and followed on from Kunttu's very successful lighting of Senate Square last year.,

Kunttu chose the sites for their prestige and visibility in the city. The newly launched Robe CitySource 96 units were specified following site tests, after which he was convinced they were THE must-use lights. The fixtures were delivered to lighting rental company Moving Light via Robe's Finnish distributor Live Nation Finland a couple of weeks before the installations went live.

Having these at his disposal enabled Kunttu to produce a spectacular colour changing canvass on Parliament House, and to create a completely different look and feel for Senate square than he had been able to do using different fixtures last year.

Kunttu has been using Robe moving lights for several years and specifies them for all his high profile shows, so knows the reliability and quality of the brand. The CitySource is a very powerful fixture utilising 96 Luxeon Rebel LEDs, giving a super-high light output designed specially for exterior installations like this. The homogenised lightsource ensures a very smooth and even coverage, and the fixture is cased in a compact aluminium IP65 rated housing.

Fifty Six CitySource 96s were used to light the front and the most visible side fascia of the magnificent Parliament House, which was designed by J S Sirén and officially inaugurated in 1931. The 75 metre wide front has a series of 14 elegant pillars running up to its roof and 46 steps at its base. The fixtures were rigged on floor stands positioned close to the walls and columns, up-lighting the building which is 25 metres tall.

Says Kunttu, "It's always great to use the latest technology, and these fixtures are simply amazing - the power and the colours are incredible, they had no trouble at all in reaching the top of the building, and are the best LED fixtures I have used to date for an architectural application of this nature".

The Parliament House installation benefitted from the superior brightness and crisp, precise colour mixing of the CitySource 96s, with another 50 fixtures used to wash the two main buildings in Senate Square surrounding the Cathedral, which itself was highlighted with a video projection. Moving Light were so impressed with the performance of the new Robe lights that they will now be replacing all their previous colour changing units with these.

The other great advantage this year in using the Robe lights was a dramatic reduction in the power consumption, enhancing the green and sustainable credentials of both light works.

The CitySource 96s have already proved their robustness, withstanding snow, biting winds and temperatures as low as minus 30, all without a single glitch.

Kunttu further comments, "We had absolutely the worst weather this year - temperatures of between minus 5 to 30 and constant snow. The transport systems all ground to a halt, but as for the CitySources, we just cleared off the snow if they were buried and they kept on rocking!"

For control, the Parliament House lights - which also included some BigLites and SHOWPIX - were programmed into a cue stack on a grandMA light console. At Senate Square, everything was programmed into a grandMA full size, and the rolling show was triggered by timecode from the accompanying soundscape.

The city of Helsinki was so delighted with the initial results, that it immediately decided to extend the Parliament House installation from 6 to 9 days.

The intention is that Helsinki Light Season becomes an annual New Year event, and is expanded next year to include light works and commissions by other artists and contributors and also incorporate other types of non-architectural light shows across the city.







