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Robe Taps into Lady Gaga Mayhem at Coachella

Products Involved

iFORTE® LTX WB **iFORTE® LTX FS** **ESPRITE®** **FORTE®** **FORTE® FS**

Lady Gaga is an artist who excels at delivering unique, ambitious visual live extravaganzas that engage the eyes, brain and heart in an intricate mix of drama, high-impact dance moves and energising music, and this year's acclaimed Coachella headliner slot took this art to new levels. Her two-hour performance complete with elaborate costumes, epic set, thought-provoking video and diligently crafted lighting has been hailed as a masterpiece of stagecraft.

Lighting designer Jeremy Lechterman of FragmentNine (F9) was part of a talented creative team – which included production designers Es Devlin and Jason Ardizzone-West, choreographer Parris Goebel, video designer Jackson Gallagher and the artist herself, who devised this stadium show, inspired by a dynamic mix of pop, opera, rock, gothic and several other genres. The show has also been staged in Mexico, Rio de Janeiro – in front of over 2 million fans – and Singapore.

Prominent on Jeremy's lighting design for Coachella 2025's Main Stage were some key Robe moving light elements – 82 x iFORTE LTXs, 17 x iFORTE LTX Follow Spot and 22 x ESPRITES.

All of these were used to great effect as the show delighted, entertained and immersed audiences in a story based on the themes of duality and inner chaos, reimagining the benchmark for spectacular high production value environments created in short timeframes.

Before Coachella, Jeremy and F9 had just recently started work with Lady Gaga and her team led by Parris Goebel who is also creative director, brought on board to deliver the combined lighting and video content package. Being able to develop these two interlinked aspects of the show in unison helped make it streamlined and harmonious, bringing a fresh and coherent look and style to the stage.

As the show developed conceptually, Jeremy also drew on his fund of early career experience, which was primarily working in theatre.

With a spectacular wide stage and upstage LED surface, a moving video disc roof piece in the centre and a powerful video floor making up a B-stage out in the arena, bright lights were essential, and Jeremy knew he could count on Robe's iFORTE.

FORTES, iFORTES and iFORTE Follow Spots are his number one spot fixture choices at the moment and are constantly on his specs because they are bright, consistent and reliable.

He appreciates the high CRI and the rich natural skin tones they produce, making these fixtures perfect for key lighting and specials.

He notes that specifically for the two Coachella shows, a full 360-degree cinema spec multi-camera system was involved in recording the performance, adding a completely new layer of production in itself that needed dealing with. Especially given the tight time window, he knew FORTE luminaires would produce exactly the desired quality and texture of light needed to work for this shoot, directed by Micah Bickham.

In addition to Lady Gaga herself, also onstage were multiple dancers and the band, so it was very busy with several performers to be lit.

At Coachella, five of the FORTE FSs were part of the Lady Gaga touring rig supplied by Solotech together with one BaseStation, with the rest supplied by 4Wall, the festival's lighting vendor.

The five touring FORTE FSs were rigged on a snake-shaped over-stage truss, which was contoured to follow the scenic set and screen lines, and was also upstage of a moving circular LED 'disk' forming part of the stage architecture.

The other 12 x FORTE FSs (from the event) were positioned on four FOH towers to get the best stage coverage.

The standard FORTES were deployed all over the stage rig, along the 'snake' truss, in the overhead and side positions.

On the four 40ft high delay towers located approximately 250ft out in the audience, more FORTES were deployed in clusters of three or four fixtures. These positions were ideal for working the stage.

As well as choosing FORTE for all its characteristics, Jeremy noted that both FORTES and ESPRITES can be sourced most places around the world, which is always a consideration when designing touring shows.

The 22 x ESPRITES were positioned in a row around the back of the deck and in the left and right wing positions, picked for their low profile as the stage needed to be kept as clean as possible from any protruding technical hardware.

Making the Mayhem show spectacular yet simultaneously intimate and adaptable to follow the artist’s narrative was the greatest challenge and also the most enjoyable part of the imaginative journey for Jeremy.

“From the first conversations, we all knew that the goal would be amalgamating the diversity of lighting and visual treatments needed to present and support a show of this scale, depth and detail, and assisting in making connections and getting the energy out to all in the audience across a vast area,” he explained.

This was the space where the entire production shimmered as a complex and invigorating collaboration between all creative aspects, technical disciplines and wider team involved in the massive operation to ensure that Coachella 2025 was such a memorable and high-value entertainment experience.

Jeremy worked on the show alongside two talented lighting programmers – Sam Payne and Dane Kick – with the latter also running the show and lighting directing in Mexico, Brazil and Singapore, and Jeremy was supported by associate lighting designer Alex Talbot.

Photo Credits: Jason Ardizzone-West, Julian Bajsel, Jeremy Lechterman, Nicole Mago

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