



LONDON'S ROYAL BALLET & OPERA COUNTS ON LIGHTWARE'S ROBUST SIGNAL MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Market

Rental & Staging

Country

United Kingdom

Lightware Equipment Used in Project

MX2-16x16-HDMI20 | HDMI-OPTX-TX100A | HDMI20-OPTJ-RX90 | HDMI20-OPTJ-TX90

The Royal Ballet and Opera (RBO), formerly the Royal Opera House is, undoubtedly, among the most prestigious arts venues in the UK. One of the more recent landmarks in the venue's journey has been a major technical upgrade project, encompassing all video, audio and broadcast infrastructure throughout the venue. Led by internal stakeholders including Video Assistant Manager, Jane Micheltmore, and Sound, Video and Broadcast (SVB) project coordinator, Daniel Arif, **the replacement of existing technology with an updated system includes the integration of Lightware video signal management solutions** including point-to-point signal extension for on-stage projectors at the 2,000 person capacity venue.



"I find Lightware products very instinctive to use, easy to program and they are quickly recognised as a device in servers such as Disguise," explains Video Assistant Manager, Jane Micheltmore. "It made sense to me to use their solutions for the complete signal distribution here at the Royal Ballet and Opera."

The integration of Lightware signal management solutions is part of a much wider five-year upgrade project across sound, video and broadcast at the venue. *"Much of the technology we're replacing dates back to the 90s,"* says Daniel Arif, Project Coordinator. *"When we were looking for a point-to-point signal distribution solution for our projectors, we needed something that would make use of the existing network infrastructure and work across different production types."*

The RBO has one of the most intense repertoires in the country and the video team is constantly changing projector specs to reflect the requirements for each show across the busy programming. Integral to the upgrade was **Lightware's MX2-16x16-HDMI20 matrix**, which has offered uncompromising signal quality, low latency, high levels of versatility and redundant functionality. It also supports various video formats, multiple resolutions and is easily controlled via Ethernet.

"We have many different shows, sometimes 2 different performances in a day, that can use projection," continues Micheltmore. *"Currently, we're running 10 different outputs, from LED walls to projectors, between three different shows and the 16x16 matrix gives me the versatility to seamlessly swap between performances."*

One of the challenges faced when working with technology in heritage spaces, such as the auditorium's Grade 2 listed proscenium, is unconventional dimensions and infrastructure. At the Royal Opera and Ballet, the proscenium has a unique arch shape, which requires non-standard resolutions for projection. *"We liked Lightware's solutions as they support transport of non-standard resolutions, so we are able to do exactly what we want to do with the video,"* continues Arif. *"It's the only box on the market that we could find to fit these needs."*

There is a main semi-permanent FOH projector positioned on the dress circle front where a Panasonic RQ25k is rigged in a noise-cancelling baffle box. The team use Disguise media servers to output a 4k signal to this unit and RBO looked to Lightware for a signal solution to distribute to this position down their single-mode fibre.



“I particularly like the single-mode fibre HDMI-OPTX-TX100A as they carry a 4K signal and network to the projector in the one fibre solution,” remarks Michelmore. *“It certainly saves time without needing to run a separate network patch. Similarly, the HDMI OPTJ powered from USB for our multimode fibre positions, is also handy as it saves on extra power breakouts at the projector end. We are constantly flying our projectors, so it’s a clean, neat and small solution that means we can project in 4K.”*

Lightware’s OPTJ kits transport the uncompressed HDMI signals seamlessly to their destination with minimal delay. While the overall upgrade at the Royal Ballet and Opera is still in progress, OPTJ kits for multi-mode point-to-point transmission are an ideal solution, but as the upgrade project progresses and the new fibre infrastructure is complete, an expansion of their use of **Lightware’s SDVoE-compatible OPTX kits** is likely.

The SVB team are pleased with the scalable framework the new MX2 has given them for video transmission. *“As we move away from the old analogue infrastructure and implement a more modern approach, Lightware’s products will prove vital to this,”* concludes Arif. *“We’re looking forward to this solution growing with us here at the Royal Opera & Ballet.”*



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