

PRODUCTION FEATURE

Sky Light and the Tower of Terror

Another EuroDisney Spectacular Launched in Sensational Manner



Cloudy weather, windy night: three tons of xenon moonlight hung at 50m high!

On 5th April, 1000 VIP guests attended the sensational launch of the latest EuroDisney attraction – the ‘Tower of Terror’ – and succumbed to an amazing and crazy “falling down” sensation, provided by a special lift dropping 15 levels at fantastic speed!

The special construction involved, the Hollywood Tower Hotel, is massive in bulk and around 56 metres high and carries marks of destruction – this mysterious facade simply being the outdoor set enclosing internal scenic elements and that special made lift machinery.

And for Disney’s event manager, it was also necessary to immerse the audience in a large scale thunderstorm, with sound effects, dramatic music, laser and firework effects, smoke and video projections – plus large-scale lighting effects.

And the lighting is where Sky Light of Paris, with their usual crop of big Syncrolite xenon units, come in. Creator and supervisor of the massive striking special effect was their Jean-Marie Leriche.

The front lighting involved 10 servo controlled SXB-5/2 units including four ‘cyclop’ DMX xenon 4kW illuminators for variable strobe flash lighting effects – fixtures developed by Yves Colombatto.

At the rear of the building, it was necessary to illuminate the whole area so as to “silhouette” the building with a bright powerful sunlight strobe and also to create the impressive columnated sun rays in the sky. To find the right backlight angles, Jean-Marie Leriche decided to hang the lights high at the rear of the structure using a 50-ton telescopic Liebherr crane boom extended at 40 metres

with an upper 10 metre jib at a 40 degrees angle.

Régis Lesouef, Zero.1 rigging expert, worked out the truss frame calculations, the structure being separated into two parts due to undesirable wind effects. The total weight of the rigged system was less than 3 tons – including 12 Syncrolite SXB-5/2s. These provided around 200 colours, thanks to the use of dual scrollers and lighting chief Jean-Yves Orcel’s expert gel choice.

Also carried on the 10 metre high truss units were the electronic power supply units. An original CEM European upgrading had been made by Sky Light to add strobe and stand-by functions to the original Syncrolite SXB-5/2 fixtures. 125 Amp and 63 Amp distro boxes were fed directly from the ground by one 125 Amp and one 63 Amp extension cables carefully connected at the truss base. (The main power supply was provided by Hertz Equipment silent generators on containers.)

Man at the lighting control console was Koen Dierickx using a Hog 1000 and radio DMX to avoid any potential communication problems from FOH to backstage located at the rear of building where the giant crane was parked.

Mounting the rigging took just one day in the rain, but two nights of programming were necessary to record the time-coded show. “Fortunately, the show took place in a good situation with cool weather – with the expected amazing and crazy artistic results,” says Jean-Marie Leriche. “The ‘upside-down’ lighting effect was a new challenge that hasn’t ever been done before, but to realise the Disney lighting designer’s dream, it was necessary to find a revolutionary solution. However, Sky Light achieved it! It was the first sunlight 60,000W xenon sunlight effect with a colour temperature of 6200 degrees Kelvin.”

Imagination, serious know-how and knowledge of the Sky Light team – and the ever-present technical challenge – were key to another successful large-scale live experience.

In addition to those named within the article, Antonio Gomez was the Syncrolite expert and Grégoire Danset and Arnaud Hembert Syncrolite technicians; Régis Lesouef was rigging chief and C.L.M. the crane provider and Franck as crane operator.



Dual truss frame mounted with 12 Syncrolite SXB-5/2s ready for flying.



“Cut view” of the massive backlight effect.



Backstage of the Tower of Terror: 12 rising xenon sources used from spot to flood.



Disney Tower of Terror illuminated in spot and flood with a large pack of xenon Syncrolite SXB-5/2s a typical 'two in one' search/washlight system.