Big Opportunities

The Stadium as Stage for High-Profile Events
Madonna's Ray of Light
Clay Paky lights up the Super Bowl Halftime Show

Madonna may have headlined Super Bowl XLV's Halftime Show, but Clay Paky Sharpy fixtures made a name for themselves too, helping to light up the stage for the Material Girl at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, IN.

Lighting designer Al Gurdon, of U.K.-based Incandescent Design, utilized 204 Sharpy's supplied by PRG after being impressed with their performance on FOX's X Factor.

Gurdon has been recognized internationally for his TV and event lighting design. He has received many awards for his lighting over the years, including Lighting Designer of the Year from the TPI Awards, Lighting Design Awards, Royal Television Society Awards, Knight of Illumination Awards, and Australia's Helpmann Award. He has served as lighting designer for the famed Eurovision Song Contest.

For the Super Bowl Halftime Show, Bruce Rodgers of Tribe Inc. was the production designer, All Access Staging built the set, and PRG and Full Flood provided the lighting services.

"The shape of the Halftime Show is always determined by the artist," says Gurdon, who has been lighting designer for two previous shows featuring The Black Eyed Peas and The Who. "Madonna is an entertainer, and this year there were many more staging elements to the show itself, including a lot of dancing, so there was less of a need for lighting to 'carry' the spectacle." This year's Halftime Show was one of the largest and most technically challenging ever, with the largest cast, most lift effects, and biggest projection and lighting rig.

Gurdon notes that, "because of the nature of the act and the show, glamour lighting was a very important element, and my job was basically to always present her and the other performers in the best light, and simply allow the audience to see the show."

As a result he created "a cleaner look this year" and was careful to preserve all the video projection mapping taking place on stage where Madonna was joined by M.I.A., Nicki Minaj, LMFAO, and Cee Lo Green.

"The Sharpys seem to be ideally suited to projects where power, brightness and optical efficiency is required," says Gurdon. "I put them in rectangular pods of 20 in the air and 16 on the floor, packed very tightly together. When used in a cluster as one big moving light, they could operate either as a solid beam that could really rival the big outdoor spots, yet we could suddenly split them into 20 beams, too."

Sharpy is a 189W moving head with a brightness usually achievable only with far greater wattages. At just 16 kg, Sharpy produces a parallel, laser-like beam with an output of 5100 footcandles at 65 feet. Its beam is sharply defined and free of any halo or discoloration around the edges. It offers an interchangeable color wheel with 14 fixed colors and an interchangeable gobo wheel with 17 fixed gobos, allowing users to change the shape of the beam and create
During the Super Bowl Halftime Show, the Clay Paky Sharpy was used in a cluster as one solid beam as a spotlight and suddenly split them into 20 smaller beams of light.

an array of mid-air effects.

Gurdon reports that the Sharpy "performed very well. They are pretty awesome for their size: extremely compact and incredibly powerful. You really get an intense effect out of them. I was very pleased."

Mike Oz Owen was the Vari-Lite board operator for the Halftime Show. A.C.T Lighting is the North American distributor for Clay Paky.

Francesco Romagnoli, Clay Paky area manager for North and Latin America, adds, "We're proud that our Sharpy is once again the feature light in such a high-profile event. Mr. Gurdon is a great friend of Clay Paky and an excellent designer and we believe the Super Bowl marks another important step in the acceptance of our products and our brand recognition in the U.S."

For more information, visit www.claypaky.it.