



Theatre Productions

Liverpool ONE Christmas Lights Switch On

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Phil Stoker, Director, Adlib

As cities across the UK jostle for the unofficial crown of 'Christmas Capital', premium city centre retail experience Liverpool ONE's spectacular 'Switch On' event pulled one of the biggest crowds, with an estimated 45,000 people rocking up to enjoy the festive vibes and a special lighting and sound show ... with a little help from Adlib!

Adlib provided lighting and sound for the 12 minute specially composed soundtrack show produced by Liverpool Empire Theatre that preceded the illumination of a giant 30 metre tall Christmas tree, made up of 280 illuminated LED hearts, located at the end of Paradise Street.

Both lighting and audio systems were designed to ensure that the buoyant crowds could fully enjoy the occasion. "We were delighted to be asked back to work on it this year," commented Ian Rubert, who co-ordinated the lighting installation on site.

Lighting was designed by Liverpool Empire, who created plenty of razzmatazz and visual magic to ramp up the excitement and anticipation ... with fixtures placed on the ground and on top of a selection of key buildings including H&M and the Bridge Street apartment's roof.

Four 4K A&O Falcon searchlights were positioned behind the tree, shooting powerful bright beams – Hollywood style – up into the night sky, while 12 Martin MAC Quantum Washes were installed on 3 scaffolding towers spread out along the street, and used to wash over the audience.



Six MAC Viper Profiles were rigged on the rooftops and projected gobos and texturing onto the adjacent grey wall. Some of these images were also related to parts of the spoken narrative running in the soundtrack.

Six out of a total of 16 x Clay Paky Mythos – were on the ground in front of the tree, with the other 10 above the audience washing colour and effects over the gathered crowds.

All these were programmed and run by Kevin Byatt from a grandMA2 full size console at the FOH control position – slightly away from the action, above street level on the roof of Starbucks – a great vantage point offering a good view across the whole area.

The console received timecode from the audio track so everything ran in sync.

The sound system was Coda ViRAY specified by Adlib's Phil Stoker, arranged in seven ground stacked towers each comprising six speakers, running all the way down Paradise Street which was the main gathering area and strategically positioned to give the most even coverage.

A small sound system was provided for local Radio City DJs who presented a pre-show warm-up session and hosted live bands who had won the chance – on air – to play in front of a live audience.



The get-in was a challenge as everything had to be done in three long overnight shifts so the shops were not disrupted during the day. Cabling was time-consuming and awkward, requiring a substantial network of catenary wires and other infrastructure, and for various reasons – including experience and knowledge of the environment – they decided on a wired rather than wireless control solution!

Being November in the north-west of England, the weather was also less than co-operative!

Not that this impacted at all on spirits or efficiency! Phil Stoker commented, "It was great to be involved again this year and to work with (Liverpool ONE events manager) Melody Beard and her team, delivering a great result to their exacting standards".



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