



Honouring Heritage with Light

Isaac Theatre Royal Christchurch

5 August 2015

To Whom it May Concern,



Re: Lighting - Isaac Theatre Royal Facade

The initial concept to light the 1908 heritage facade of the iconic Isaac Theatre Royal was formulated in mid-2010 by Richard McGowan of Warren & Mahoney Architects. Richard engaged Kevin Cawley as the Lighting Designer for the project.

The plans were approved by the board of the Theatre Royal Charitable Foundation before the devastating 2011 earthquakes. The concept and brief was to give the facade a face-lift making it elegant and visually stunning for all occasions, whilst respecting the heritage fabric and complimenting the unique architecture. The lighting design that Kevin came up with was more than could have been imagined.

Kevin's background is as a theatrical lighting designer. He had worked in our theatre designing productions on our stage, so we were very fortunate to have a designer that not only knew the building but also had the knowledge of how a theatre works.

With this in mind Kevin brought together a creative team to create stunning effects for the facade. The design allows us to create scenes that not only pay respect to the heritage and architecture of the building, but also creates personalised light shows for whatever production is playing at the time.

Fortunately the theatre's facade and stage house were spared after the devastation. Our brand new iconic Isaac Theatre Royal has been rebuilt and restored back to its former glory. We congratulate Kevin on his design and we are delighted with the result. This is a fine example of Kevin's dedication to the Christchurch rebuild and its community.

We are delighted to endorse Kevin's entry to the IES Lighting Awards.

Neil Cox

Chief Executive

Isaac Theatre Royal/Theatre Royal Charitable Foundation



Solution

1. Facade in Rust (veranda 30%) nothing on in the theatre

Act 1. Scene 1 This is when nothing is happening in the theatre.

We created a stunning excellent mix of warm colours carefully crafted to accentuate the masonry of the facade.

Act 1. Scene 2 Under the Veranda.

Just a subtle 5K to light the walkway with 4K up light on four columns for contrast.

2. Facade in Steel Blue (veranda 50%) (Foyer on) in rehearsal

Act 2. Scene 1 This is where a production is in rehearsal.

There is a hint on the facade of what is to come in the following weeks. The light plotting for this depends on the theme and nature of the production.

Act 2. Scene 2 Under the veranda.

The foyer is illuminated and we now add 4K down lights to the mix to increase the light intensity (things are about to happen)...



Summary

All of my lighting design is only as good as the people operating it. I was so fortunate to have one of the best lighting programmers I have worked with, Matt Mard. Matt, like myself, comes from the theatre so it is such a pleasure to hand this over to him, as he understands how great lighting design speaks to the people. Another ray of hope for the Christchurch community to have our Isaac Theatre Royal back.

Acknowledgments

Neil Cox (General Manager Isaac Theatre Royal)

Richard McGowan (Principal Warren & Mahoney)

Vanessa Carswell (Associate Warren & Mahoney)

Iain Nicholls (Associate Warren & Mahoney)

Matthias Mard (Technical Manager Isaac Theatre Royal)

Allan Stephenson (Philips Lighting Specification Consultant)

Morgann Le Bars (Philips Systems Engineer)

Isaac Theatre Royal

This project was a unique and rare opportunity for theatrically trained lighting designer Kevin Cawley. He had lit productions in the ITR in the past, and now he could use those same theatrical talents on the facade. In our earthquakes the facade was damaged, but not destroyed. Thanks to Neil Cox and his team and their tireless work we have our theatre back to the same as it was before. It's stunning you would think it's a refurbishment not an entire rebuild.

Concept

The use of light and shadow on this type of historical architecture was most important but not original. The key to this design was to use a theatrical production process, detailed focusing, then plotting or setting different scenes for every occasion and that was original. Several lighting acts will show this wonderful piece of historical architecture in its beauty, splendor and glory.

Inspiration

We took inspiration from the theatrical production process detailing what we do in the theatre. We tell a story to convey emotion and create moments of theatrical wonderment. This is what we needed the facade to do in all the acts. The theatre needed to speak for itself. 1. Look at my splendor 2. Look at what I do 3. Entertain and enjoy yourself.



Solution continued

3. Facade in a colour choice from Matt (veranda 100%) Opening night

Act 3. Scene 1 Its opening night so all the facade is now performing to its maximum again depending on the theme and nature of the production. (There may be colour and movement if appropriate)

Act 3. Scene 1 Under the veranda. Along with all the 4 and 5 K we now have 4 large custom built chandlers and festoons (proclaiming this is it).

To achieve this design we used Philips Color Kinetics LED fittings so extremely energy efficient and to program the effects we spent many hours in a programing suite. The total system is computer controlled and all fittings are individually addressed to give us total control. When you have total control you can achieve total visual comfort. There was a short fall with the budget so funds had to be raised. All parties took this into consideration.



