



<http://www.stagedesign.org/>

Modern stage designs increasingly reach proportions that by far exceed the classical definition of a stage as we know it from theater, musical, or opera productions. Novel stage environments that increasingly require more and effort in terms of architecture, technology, and logistics are being created on a continuous basis. The gigantic open-air touring productions for international stars, for example, can't help but raise the question: "When will we reach the limitations of what can be done within the framework of a concert tour?" But in spite of all the abounding megalomania, an illustrated volume such as this must not lose sight of comparatively smaller productions. At the end of the day, the excellence of the production itself determines what content reaches the spectator on an emotional level. Large-scale productions carry the inherent danger that the audience might lose sight of the essentials, i.e., the artists. Stage designs which appear simplistic at first are quite capable—together with the right production—of touching the spectator just as deeply.

While working on STAGE DESIGN I was frequently surprised by such extraordinary ideas as "ER-ARITJARITJAKA", in which an important part of the stage design was placed out of the audience's sight behind a white façade. Most of the time the action is actually projected onto the façade by means of cameras and a video projector, by means of which the show becomes accessible to the audience. Or we might take the cross medial performance "delusions," which plays with the limits of perception. The performers interact with their independent images of self by means of software art. Projections and illusions compose the ever changing stage.

LED surfaces of all shapes and sizes that show videos, pictures or graphic animations are taking on an ever greater role in many a stage design. This is especially true of concert tours and television shows, but also applies to special events. Outstanding examples include productions like "Depeche Mode – Touring The Angel," "George Michael – 25LIVE," "U2 – Vertigo," "Red Hot Chili Peppers – Stadium Arcadium," "Robbie Williams – Close Encounters," "Pop Idol," the "Eurovision Song Contests" from 2006 and 2007, and last but not least the opening ceremony of the "Asian Games 2006" with the largest LED-Screen ever constructed.

I noticed a similarly exciting development when it comes to staging special locations which are incorporated into the stage or become part of its backdrop. One example is the skyline of Frankfurt/Main: to welcome the World Cup, the city hosted the three-evening event SKY ARENA, composed of a combination of lighting effects and large-scale slide projections. With its BLUE GOAL production, the city of Hamburg achieved a similarly successful tie-in with the World Cup 2006. Here 175 blue goals were lit in the evenings, submerging the city in blue light and turning Hamburg itself into a stage. The "ARD Olympia Gala 2004" in Athens made full use of the approximately 2500-year-old temple of Zeus as well as the Acropolis as major elements of its backdrop. A further example is the opening ceremony of the main railway station in Berlin for which a light symphony was composed and performed.

STAGE DESIGN



<http://www.stagedesign.org/>

STAGE DESIGN documents a great variety of stage productions from the theater, the opera, concert tours, musicals, TV shows, and special events by means of emotionally charged photographs that display a great richness of detail. For most production, a look behind the scenery grants an insight into the impressive and masterly designed stage constructions. The photos of the productions themselves portray the emotional power of the various stage designs. As photographer and author of STAGE DESIGN, I consider it imperative to create pictures which impart information, inspiration and, last but not least, enjoyment. Thus I hope for you, the reader and the viewer of this book, that my pictures provide exactly this experience.